

Chapter 1

Introduction

This chapter presents the background, statement of the problem, and the purpose of the study, setting the direction for the research.

1.1 Background and rationale

Conflicts within communities are a normal aspect of everyday social life. In barangays, residents live close together, share public spaces, and interact regularly. These conditions make disputes over family matters, property boundaries, noise disturbances, and interpersonal disagreements more likely. If such conflicts are left unresolved, they can strain relationships, disrupt peace, and escalate into serious problems that affect the larger community.

To address these issues at the grassroots level, the Government of the Philippines institutionalized a localized conflict resolution system known as the Katarungang Pambarangay (KP) or Barangay Justice System. This system is established under the Local Government Code (Republic Act No. 7160) and is designed to provide accessible, informal, and community-based dispute resolution through mediation, conciliation, and arbitration. The KP aims to settle disputes within the barangay before they enter the formal judiciary, reducing court congestion and offering a more affordable and culturally appropriate avenue for justice. The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and its Local Government Academy provide oversight, training, and support to ensure

barangays implement the Katarungang Pambarangay procedures effectively (DILG, 2024; Local Government Code, 1991).

The KP process is led by the Punong Barangay (Barangay Captain) and the Lupon Tagapamayapa (peacekeeping committee). These officials facilitate amicable settlements, record conflict cases, and document outcomes. Proper documentation is essential: it allows barangay officials to track dispute patterns, evaluate the efficiency of settlement processes, and maintain transparency and accountability. Without systematic record-keeping, it is difficult to assess whether disputes are being resolved fairly and whether recurring issues need targeted interventions.

One major program that highlights best practices in conflict resolution and documentation is the Lupong Tagapamayapa Incentives Awards (LTIA)—an annual recognition system instituted by the DILG. Established in 1997 and mandated under the Local Government Code, the LTIA rewards Lupons that demonstrate exemplary implementation of the Katarungang Pambarangay system, including case settlement, efficiency of operations, and proper documentation practices (DILG, Region XII, 2023; DILG Region IV-A, 2025).

In addition, DILG reports and awards data indicate that barangays with well-organized records and consistent application of Katarungang Pambarangay procedures tend to perform better in dispute resolution and contribute to peace

and order in their communities. For example, annual LTIA evaluations assess criteria such as efficiency in operations, effectiveness in attaining Katarungang Pambarangay objectives, and systematic documentation of cases, which underscores the importance of reliable administrative practices in community justice systems (DILG Region XII, 2025).

Despite these institutional efforts, barangays still vary widely in their capacity to implement Katarungang Pambarangay procedures. Some have structured logs of complaints and documented settlement agreements, while others struggle with administrative workload, lack of training, or insufficient documentation practices. These variations affect not only how quickly disputes are resolved but also how residents perceive the fairness and credibility of the barangay justice system.

In the context of the Barangays of Libertad, studying the types of conflicts documented, the frequency with which they occur, and how they are resolved under the Katarungang Pambarangay system provides a clearer picture of how well community-based dispute resolution operates at the ground level. This analysis helps determine whether the Katarungang Pambarangay procedures are effectively administered and whether they align with national guidelines for mediation and conciliation.

Furthermore, understanding documented conflict cases also contributes to evaluating local governance performance. It highlights strong practices that should be sustained and reveals areas that may need targeted improvements—whether in training barangay officials, enhancing documentation systems, or improving community engagement and awareness of Katarungang Pambarangay processes. By focusing on these areas, barangay officials can strengthen their conflict resolution strategies and promote peace and harmony among residents.

Overall, examining documented conflict cases in the Barangays of Libertad offers valuable insights into the daily realities of local dispute management and the functioning of the barangay justice system. It supports evidence-based recommendations on how the Katarungang Pambarangay system can continue to be an effective mechanism for community conflict resolution in the Philippines.

1.2 Statement of the problem

This study aims to describe the documented conflict cases in the Barangays of Libertad. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

- 1. What types of conflict cases are commonly documented in Barangays Dulong, Taytayan, Poblacion, and Lubluban?**
- 2. How frequent are these conflict cases within the given period?**
- 3. What resolution procedures are used by the barangay in handling these cases?**
- 4. How effective are these procedures based on the recorded outcomes?**

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General objective

To examine the documented conflict cases in four (4) selected Barangays of Libertad, specifically, Dulong, Taytayan, Poblacion, and Lubluban by identifying the types of disputes reported, determining how often they occur, and assessing the procedures used in resolving them under the Katarungang Pambarangay system.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

1. To classify the documented conflict cases according to their type (e.g., family-related disputes, property issues, neighborhood conflicts, and other common barangay concerns).
2. To determine the frequency of each type of conflict recorded within the four (4) selected barangays of Libertad.
3. To describe the resolution procedures applied by the Punong Barangay and the Lupon Tagapamayapa in handling the recorded conflicts.
4. To evaluate the level of compliance of the barangays with the standard Katarungang Pambarangay procedures, particularly in mediation, conciliation, arbitration, and documentation.
5. To identify common issues or gaps in the documentation and processing of conflict cases in the barangays.
6. To provide insights and recommendations that may help improve the barangay justice system and strengthen conflict-resolution practices in Libertad.

1.4 Scope and limitations of the study

This study focuses only on documented conflict cases in four (4) selected Barangays of Libertad, Misamis Oriental (Dulong, Taytayan, Poblacion, and Lubluban). The data will rely on existing barangay records and information obtained during our immersion under the DILG office.

The study does not include:

- Unreported or informal conflicts,
- Conflicts handled by agencies outside the barangay,
- Personal interviews with involved parties (unless allowed by barangay officials),
- Court-filed cases.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings will benefit the following:

School. Schools can use the results to enhance lessons related to governance, social science, and community engagement. The study may also guide school programs on peace education and conflict management.

Students. Students gain practical knowledge about how local dispute-resolution systems work in real-life community settings. The findings can be used as a reference for research, community immersion, or civic-related projects.

Teachers. Teachers can integrate the results into classroom discussions, especially in subjects like Social Studies, Civic Education, and Practical Research.

Municipality. Local government offices can use the findings to assess how well barangays implement the Katarungang Pambarangay system. The results may support policy improvements, training programs, and initiatives aimed at strengthening peace and order.

Researchers and Academics. Future researchers may use the study as a reference for exploring local governance, conflict resolution, and community development. It also adds to the growing literature on barangay-level justice systems.

Peace and Order Councils. Municipal and barangay peace and order councils can use the data to identify recurring issues, create targeted interventions, and support conflict-prevention strategies.

Overall, this study is significant because it helps different sectors understand how documented conflicts reflect community realities—and how improving resolution procedures can lead to a more peaceful and organized local environment.

1.6 Definition of Terms

Arbitration. A formal dispute resolution process where the Punong Barangay or a chosen Lupon member makes a binding decision on the case when both parties agree to submit the dispute to arbitration.

Barangay Justice System (Katarungang Pambarangay). A community-based mechanism mandated by the Local Government Code that allows barangays to settle disputes through mediation, conciliation, or arbitration before cases reach the formal courts. It is handled by the Punong Barangay and the Lupon Tagapamayaya.

Conciliation. A barangay-level procedure in which a Lupon member facilitates discussion between parties to help them reach a settlement when mediation is unsuccessful.

Conflict Case. A documented complaint or dispute filed by residents in the barangay, involving issues such as family disagreements, property concerns, neighborhood disturbances, or other interpersonal conflicts.

Documentation. The process of recording conflict cases, mediation sessions, agreements, and outcomes in the barangay's official records, including blotters, minutes, and settlement forms.

Lupon Tagapamayapa. A group of community members appointed by the Punong Barangay to assist in mediating and settling disputes. They conduct conciliation proceedings and help maintain peace within the community.

Mediation. A resolution process where the Punong Barangay or an authorized Lupon member helps disputing parties talk through their concerns and find a voluntary agreement.

Resolution Procedures. The step-by-step processes followed by barangay officials to handle conflict cases, including receiving complaints, conducting mediation or conciliation sessions, recording agreements, and issuing certification to file action when necessary.

Punong Barangay. The elected head of the barangay who serves as the primary mediator of disputes and oversees the whole Katarungang Pambarangay process.

Settlement. A mutually agreed-upon resolution between disputing parties, documented and signed at the barangay level, indicating that the issue has been resolved.

Types of Conflicts. Categories used to classify documented disputes, such as family-related issues, property boundary problems, noise or disturbance complaints, and other interpersonal disagreements.

Chapter 2

Review of Related Literatures

This chapter presents the body of local and foreign literature that supports and informs the present study. It discusses published works that examine the implementation of the Katarungang Pambarangay system, the handling of community-level disputes, and the role of grassroots justice mechanisms in maintaining social order.

2.1 Local Literature

Local research on the Katarungang Pambarangay and community-level conflict resolution in the Philippines provides a substantial foundation for understanding how disputes are managed within barangays. These studies explore the experiences of barangay officials, the participation of residents, the effectiveness of mediation processes, and the challenges that arise in implementing the Barangay Justice System. By examining these works, the study gains insight into the practical realities of conflict handling at the grassroots level, as well as the recurring administrative, procedural, and cultural issues that shape the outcomes of local dispute resolution.

Studies on the Katarungang Pambarangay (KP) consistently highlight both its usefulness and the gaps that appear in day-to-day implementation. In Quezon City, one study documented how barangay mediation remains the first stop for residents experiencing domestic or neighborhood conflict. The researchers found

that while KP is perceived as effective, the process often suffers from low attendance of disputing parties and inconsistent case follow-up (Bestlink College Researchers, 2024). This mirrors patterns seen in many urban barangays where caseloads are high and documentation practices vary widely.

A similar evaluation in Tarlac emphasized the grassroots peace-building role of the KP system. Almazan (2025) explained that residents value the barangays' capacity to settle disputes informally, especially those involving families or neighbors, which are culturally sensitive. However, limited training among Lupon members and lack of resources continue to weaken procedural consistency. His findings support the need for continuous capacity building at the barangay level.

Furthermore, in Ilocos Sur, Cerna (2023) assessed KP implementation and highlighted that while most barangay officials know the legal framework of the system, many have not undergone formal mediator training. This results in variations in how mediation or conciliation is performed, affecting fairness and efficiency. Her study suggested that improving mediator competence could significantly raise settlement success rates.

However, documentation issues also surfaced in Northern Luzon. Damayon et al. (2022) found notable inconsistencies across barangays regarding record-keeping, case logging, and issuance of settlement forms. These gaps make it

difficult to track repeat offenders, recurring conflicts, and compliance with settlements. Despite these weaknesses, community trust in barangay mediation remained high, showing the importance of KP as the primary conflict-resolution venue in local governance.

In addition, The internal work experiences of Lupon Tagapamayapa members were explored by Verdad (2024), who reported that mediators face emotional burdens, role ambiguity, and minimal institutional incentives. According to the study, Lupon members often mediate conflicts involving their own neighbors or relatives, which intensifies stress and complicates decision-making. Verdad highlighted the need for psychological support and structured workloads.

A study by Silliman University researchers strengthened this point, noting that barangay officials responsible for KP are often overwhelmed due to the simultaneous administrative tasks they handle (Tiu & Malayang, 2018). The researchers observed that high caseloads and lack of formal training constrain officials from fully applying the step-by-step KP procedures, leading to delays or informal shortcuts.

Finally, a research in Cagayan de Oro by Gonzales (2020) showed that KP processes are more effective in barangays where residents have high awareness of their rights and responsibilities. Gonzales found that well-informed residents tend to comply with mediation schedules and agreements more consistently,

demonstrating that community awareness campaigns help strengthen the barangay justice system.

Overall, the local studies consistently show that while the Katarungang Pambarangay system remains an essential mechanism for resolving disputes at the grassroots level, its effectiveness varies significantly across communities. Factors such as mediator training, administrative support, documentation practices, and residents' awareness strongly influence how cases are handled.

These findings highlight persistent gaps in the barangay justice system and emphasize the importance of examining how specific communities—such as the barangays of Libertad—document conflicts, manage case frequency, and follow proper resolution procedures.

The recurring issues identified in local literature reinforce the need for a focused analysis of how KP functions on the ground and where improvements can be made

2.2 Foreign Literatures

International literature on community-based and informal justice systems offers valuable comparative perspectives that help frame the Philippine experience within a broader global context. Research from other countries highlights how culturally grounded mediation, village-level conflict mechanisms, and alternative dispute-resolution structures operate outside formal courts. These studies provide useful benchmarks for understanding the strengths and limitations of grassroots justice models, allowing the present study to situate the Katarungang Pambarangay within wider discussions on community governance and conflict management.

Comparative research in Southeast Asia shows similar strengths and challenges among community-based justice systems. In Thailand and Indonesia, for example, village-level mediation structures handle disputes using culturally embedded processes. Glubwila et al. (2021) found that these systems work best when mediators are trained and supported by local institutions, mirroring the Philippine experience under KP. Their cross-country analysis emphasized the need for consistent documentation and procedural clarity.

In Indonesia, Haq et al. (2023) examined how community mediation helped resolve pandemic-related conflicts, especially in vulnerable rural areas. The authors explained that mediation provided fast, low-cost conflict relief when formal courts were inaccessible. They also noted that community trust is a decisive

factor—reinforcing the idea that dispute-resolution systems rooted in local culture, like KP, are often more effective at maintaining social stability.

Sainul et al. (2024) studied traditional non-litigation mechanisms, particularly in handling family disputes through customary mediation. Their findings revealed that incorporating cultural norms into conflict resolution promotes compliance and strengthens community cohesion. This parallels the KP's emphasis on amicable settlement, suggesting that culturally grounded mediation remains a powerful tool for community peace-building across Asia.

The foreign literatures further strengthens the understanding that community-based justice systems share common strengths and challenges across different countries. Successful implementation depends on cultural alignment, trust in local mediators, institutional support, and consistent documentation—factors echoed in the Philippine experience. These international insights support the relevance of analyzing the KP's actual practice in Libertad, showing that grassroots conflict resolution is most effective when structured procedures, trained mediators, and community engagement work together. The parallels found in other nations confirm that enhancing local justice mechanisms is a global priority, and they provide valuable benchmarks for evaluating and improving barangay-level conflict resolution.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

This chapter presents the methods and procedures used in conducting the study. These methods were selected to ensure that the data collected are appropriate, reliable, and aligned with the objectives of the study.

3.1 Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by **Conflict Theory** and **Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Theory**. Conflict Theory explains that conflict is a normal part of community life. In barangays, people interact closely, which can lead to misunderstandings and disputes involving family matters, property issues, and neighborhood concerns.

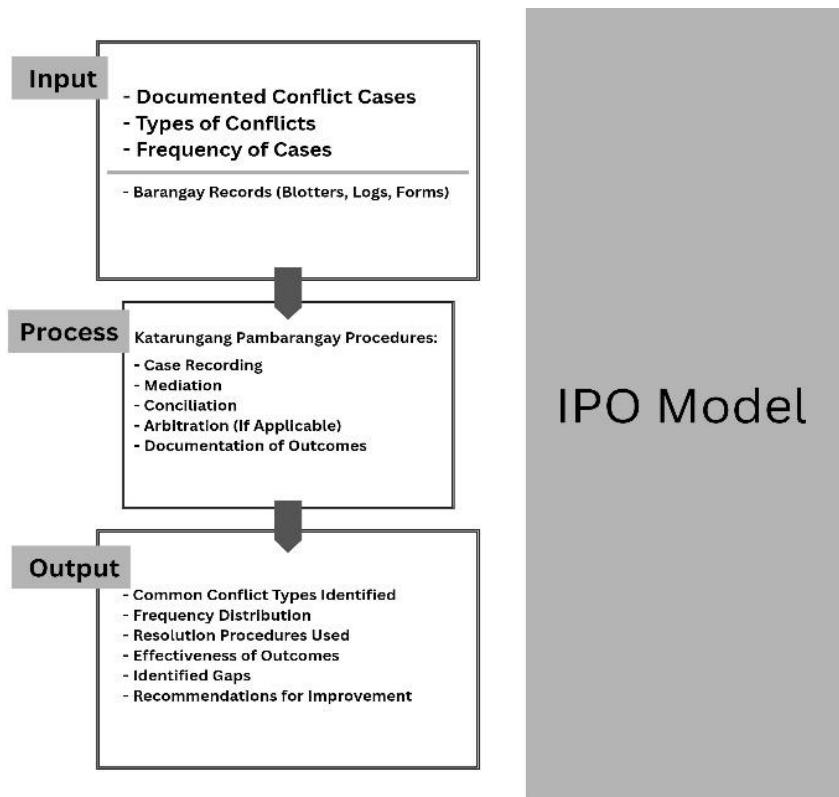
These conflicts arise from differences in interests, behavior, and expectations among residents. If not properly addressed, such conflicts may disturb peace and order in the community.

To manage these conflicts, the study is also anchored on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Theory. ADR focuses on resolving disputes outside the formal court system through peaceful methods such as mediation, conciliation, and arbitration. This theory emphasizes cooperation, dialogue, and mutual agreement rather than punishment.

In the Philippine setting, ADR principles are applied through the Katarungang Pambarangay System under Republic Act No. 7160. Barangay officials, particularly the Punong Barangay and the Lupon Tagapamayaya, handle conflicts at the community level and document their resolution. Guided by these theories, the study examines documented conflict cases to understand how disputes arise and how they are resolved in the barangays of Libertad.

3.2 Conceptual Framework

The study follows an **Input-Process-Output (IPO) Model**, which is appropriate for descriptive research. This framework illustrates how documented conflict cases are handled through barangay justice procedures and how these lead to specific outcomes.



3.3 Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive research design. Descriptive research is appropriate because the study aims to describe existing conditions rather than manipulate variables. Specifically, it focused on identifying the types of documented conflict cases, their frequency, and the resolution procedures applied by the barangays under the Katarungang Pambarangay system.

The design allowed the researchers to systematically examine barangay records and official documents to present a clear picture of how conflicts are handled and documented in the selected barangays of Libertad. No experimental treatment or intervention was applied, as the study relied solely on existing data and records.

3.4 Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study consisted of barangay officials and records custodians directly involved in the Katarungang Pambarangay process. These included the Punong Barangay, selected members of the Lupon Tagapamayapa, and barangay secretaries from the four (4) selected barangays of Libertad, namely Dulong, Taytayan, Poblacion, and Lubluban.

The respondents were chosen because they are responsible for handling, recording, and maintaining conflict case documents. Their role provided access to reliable and official information relevant to the objectives of the study.

3.5 Sampling Procedure

The study employed purposive sampling. This sampling method was used because only specific barangays and individuals were relevant to the research objectives. The four (4) barangays were selected based on accessibility, availability of documented conflict records, and relevance to the researchers' immersion under the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

Within each barangay, respondents were selected based on their involvement in the Katarungang Pambarangay process. This ensured that the data gathered were accurate and directly related to conflict documentation and resolution practices.

3.6 Research Instrument

The primary research instrument used in the study was a document analysis checklist. This checklist was developed by the researchers based on the objectives of the study and the standard procedures of the Katarungang Pambarangay system. It served as a guide in systematically reviewing barangay records and ensured that the same set of information was gathered across all selected barangays. The use of this instrument helped maintain consistency, accuracy, and objectivity in data collection.

The checklist included the following components:

1. Type of conflict case
2. Date and frequency of occurrence
3. Parties involved
4. Resolution procedure applied (mediation, conciliation, or arbitration)
5. Outcome of the case (settled, unresolved, or referred)
6. Completeness of documentation

The checklist helped ensure consistency and organization in reviewing barangay records.

3.7 Data-Gathering Procedure

Permission to conduct the study was first secured from the appropriate barangay offices and through coordination with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Office of Libertad, Misamis Oriental, during the researchers' immersion. After approval, the researchers reviewed available barangay records, including blotter books, mediation logs, and settlement documents. Information relevant to the study was recorded using the document analysis checklist. No personal interviews with disputing parties were conducted, in accordance with the scope and limitations of the study.

All collected data were treated with confidentiality and were used strictly for academic purposes.

3.8 Data Analysis

The data gathered were organized, classified, and summarized according to the objectives of the study. Conflict cases were grouped based on their type, frequency, and resolution procedure.

Descriptive analysis was used to explain patterns observed in the data, such as commonly reported conflicts and frequently used resolution methods. The analysis focused on presenting factual and straightforward interpretations without drawing conclusions beyond the recorded information.

3.9 Statistical Treatment of Data

The study used simple descriptive statistics to analyze the data. These included:

- Frequency counts
- Percentages

Frequency counts were used to determine how often specific types of conflict occurred, while percentages were used to show the proportion of each type of conflict and resolution procedure. These statistical tools were appropriate for summarizing and presenting data in a clear and understandable manner.