

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 Lupon 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 Lurons 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 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
- 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

This study is important because it provides a clearer understanding of how conflicts are handled and documented in the Barangays of Libertad, Misamis Oriental.

By identifying the types of disputes, their frequency, and the procedures used in resolving them, the study offers insights that can strengthen the barangay justice system and improve community relationships.

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.

1.8 Definition of Terms

For clarity and understanding, the following key terms are defined as they are used in this study. These definitions aim to provide a common framework for readers and ensure consistent interpretation throughout the research.

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 Tagapamayapa.

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.

