



# KATARUNGANG PAMBARANGAY IN METRO VIGAN, PROVINCE OF ILOCOS SUR: AN ASSESSMENT

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## ABSTRACT

*This study assessed the Katarungang Pambarangay as it is implemented in Metro Vigan, Ilocos Sur by focusing on the extent of awareness of barangay officials and residents on its implementing rules and regulations. It also examined the relationship between respondents' profile and their awareness, the significant differences of the respondents' awareness if taken by municipality, and the experiences of the involved parties during the proceedings by the Lupon.*

*Results reveal that the respondents are dominated by those aged 31–40 years old, male, married, college graduate, residents of the barangays for more than nine years, and those who did not receive any training. They are “Much Aware” on the creation of KP in their respective barangays, on the qualification of members, on the implementing rules, on the rules during mediation and implementation, and on the procedures in solving cases and conflicts. On the other hand, they are “Very Much Aware” on the cases covered by the KP. There is a significant relationship between the extent of awareness of the respondents and their age, sex, highest educational attainment, number of years residing in barangay, and number of trainings and seminars attended. Also, there is a significant difference on the extent of awareness of the groups of respondents taken by municipality along qualification of the members, creation, and implementing rules of the KP. The most common problems encountered during the mediation and conciliation proceedings are hard-headedness and lack of cooperation between both parties.*

*The researcher recommends that cases to be resolved should be properly studied by the members of the Lupon. Also, the presence of the Katarungang Pambarangay and the composition of different committees must be informed to the community. Members of the KP in cases involving their families or relatives must not be biased in the resolution of cases. They may also undergo training programs and seminars to update themselves on the provisions of the law. Lastly, further studies should focus on the systematic resolution of cases that is fair and acceptable to all people concerned.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Katarungang Pambarangay, Lupon, Awareness, Resolution*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Katarungang Pambarangay is an empowering and alternative tool for the resolution of family and community disputes at the barangay level and as such, barangay constituents should take advantage of its value. Republic Act 7160, also known as the Local Government Code, was created in 1991 right after the implementation of the Republic Act 6975 or the Department of Interior and Local Government Act of 1990. It mandates each barangay to enforce peace and order and provide support for the effective enforcement of human rights and justice. It has also recognized the Barangay Justice System as an alternative venue for the resolution of disputes to reduce backlogs in the Criminal Justice System. The only challenge now facing local governments is to harness Katarungang Pambarangay as a valuable mechanism available in administering justice, advancing human rights, protecting the people, and resolving and mediating conflict at the barangay level through non-adversarial means.

According to the 2007 baseline study conducted for the access for justice for the Poor Project, 98% of the total 41,995 barangays all

over the country or around 41,155 barangays have functional BJS. This indicates a continuous increase from the data recorded in 1999 in the study funded by the USAID, where 38,008 Barangays out of the total 39,721 barangays at that time have Lupon Tagapamayapa in place. Empirical studies on the effectiveness of the KP recognize two kinds of outcomes resulting from implementation: instrumental and intrinsic worth. The instrumental worth focuses on the contribution of KP in de-clogging court dockets and thereby generating government savings. The intrinsic worth, on the other hand, measure the success of the KP in terms of behavioral changes in the community and the access of vulnerable groups to some form of security, dispute resolution, and justice, apart from its role in de-clogging court dockets. (Republic Act 7160, (1991) Local Government Code of 1991, Chapter VII, Title Book III)

With the fast-evolving demand for the access of justice nowadays, there is a need to utilize this mechanism more strategically and pro-actively as a way to promote peace and order in every barangay. The Punong Barangay (Barangay Captain), members of the



Lupong Tagapamayapa (Barangay Peace Council), as well as the community will benefit greatly from the mechanism. Under the Barangay Justice System, the main strategy of settling disputes is to provide a venue for the disputing parties to search for a solution that is mutually acceptable. Hence, the primary role of the system is not to decide disputes and impose a solution to the parties but to assist the parties to discuss the possible amicable settlement of their disputes. The Punong Barangay and Lupon Members do not act as the adjudicators of disputes; instead they will be acting as the facilitators for the discussion of possible solutions. The personal appearance and participation of the disputing parties is necessary to reach amicable settlement. The Barangay Justice System provides alternative mode for dispute resolution to costly and lengthy process of setting disputes in regular courts. Instead of going through the technical procedure of filing formal pleadings and presenting evidence in courts, the parties of disputes are given the opportunity to try to talk with each other and resolve their disputes amicably. In the Katarungang Pambarangay, the parties do not need to secure the service of the lawyer. In fact, the law prohibits the participation of the lawyers in the conciliation proceedings. While cases that are tried in courts generally take years to be resolved, cases that go through Barangay Justice System would generally only take few weeks (Republic Act 7160, (1991) Establishing a System of Amicably Settling Disputes at the Barangay Level.)

Simply put, the Katarungang Pambarangay provides a friendly, inexpensive, and speedy forum for the settlement of disputes where the parties can freely explore options for amicably resolving their disputes without resulting to courts. In some areas especially those remote areas where the courts are inaccessible, both because of the location and of the prohibitive cost of litigation, the Katarungang Pambarangay, despite its limitations, can be the only venue that the poor can avail of for the resolutions of their problems. The Katarungang Pambarangay also envisions complementing the court in administering justice. For cases covered by the Katarungang Pambarangay, it is compulsory for the parties to

go through the proceeding first before going to the court. It is only when the Katarungang Pambarangay has failed to resolve the dispute that the parties will be allowed to bring their case to court. With more disputing parties settling their disputes at the community level, it is expected that the filing of cases between the members of the same community will be minimized. This, in turn, will help reduce the congestion of the court dockets and hopefully improve the efficiency and quality of courts dispensation of justice. (Nolledo, J. N., (1992) The Local Government Code of 1991 Annotated. Metro Manila National Book Store. 1st ed.)

The study thus hopes to examine the Katarungang Pambarangay as it is implemented in Metro Vigan, Ilocos Sur with the end view of determining the successes and possible problems of the program. In so doing, the study aims to provide the agencies concerned with baseline data on the implementation, administration, and supervision of the Katarungang Pambarangay for future policy directions. It is also hoped that this study will be a positive contribution to both the academe and the government in general towards improving the administration of justice in our country.

## II. METHODOLOGY

The study employed the descriptive correlational method of research. Adopting the purposive sampling procedure, the study involved 270 respondents among the top three most populated barangays of the municipalities in Metro Vigan. The municipalities are as follows: Caoayan, Vigan, Bantay, Sta. Catalina, and San Vicente. The respondents from every barangay were the Barangay Captain, representatives from Barangay Peace Action Team, the Barangay Kagawad who chairs the Committee of Peace and Order, five representatives from the non-governmental organization, five from the professional sector, and five respondents who experienced the proceedings of the Lupon. The five representatives from the different sector were arbitrarily set by the researcher. Table 1 shows the respondents' distribution.

**Table 1**  
**Respondents of the Study**

Municipalities	Barangay Chairman	Representative from BPAT	Barangay Kagawad (Committee of Peace and Order)	Non-Government Organization Representative	Professional Sector Representative	Representatives who experience the proceedings of the Lupon
<b>VIGAN</b>						
Tamag	1	1	1	5	5	5
Ayusan Norte	1	1	1	5	5	5
Pantay Fatima	1	1	1	5	5	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>SAN VICENTE</b>						
San Sebastian	1	1	1	5	5	5
Pudoc	1	1	1	5	5	5
Bantaoyay	1	1	1	5	5	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>



STA. CATALINA						
Tamorong	1	1	1	5	5	5
Cabittaogan	1	1	1	5	5	5
Poblacion	1	1	1	5	5	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
CAOAYAN						
Fuerte	1	1	1	5	5	5
Pantay Tamurong	1	1	1	5	5	5
Puro	1	1	1	5	5	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
BANTAY						
Tay-ac	1	1	1	5	5	5
Bulag	1	1	1	5	5	5
Balaleng	1	1	1	5	5	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>

The main data gathering instrument in this study is a questionnaire which is composed of three parts. The first part inquired on the socio-demographic profile of the respondents. Part II dealt with the extent of awareness of the respondents on the

Katrungang Pambarangay. Part III was on the experiences encountered by involved parties during the proceedings.

In order to determine the extent of awareness on Katarungang Pambarangay in Metro Vigan the following norms were used.

Mean Rating	Descriptive Rating	Interpretation
4.21-5.00	Very Much Aware	Very High
3.41- 4.20	Much Aware	High
2.61-3.40	Moderately Aware	Average
1.81-2.60	Slightly Aware	Low
1.00-1.80	Not Aware	Very Low

To gather the necessary data for this study the researcher asked permission to the Barangay Chairpersons among the top three most populated barangay in each of the municipalities and city of Metro Vigan. A modified questionnaire checklist was adapted from the study of Torricer (2015) entitled "The Barangay Justice System in Municipality of Sto. Domingo, Ilocos Sur" to gather the data needed in this study. Records of cases were reviewed by the Barangay Secretaries and Barangay Chairpersons in order to determine the respondents for the last research question which is about the experiences of those involved in proceedings. The questionnaires were personally administered to the Punong Barangay, the members of their respective Barangay Lupon, and the other groups of respondents.

**On Highest Educational Attainment.** A great percentage of the respondents are college graduates (111 or 41.1%), followed by high school graduates (62 or 23%), high school undergraduates (40 or 14.8%), and college undergraduate (39 or 14.4%).

**On number of years residing in the barangay.** Most of the respondents (235 or 87%) have been residing in the barangay for more than nine years.

**On related training programs/seminars attended.** Great majority of the respondents (223 or 82.6%) had not yet attended trainings and seminars.

## 2. Extent of Awareness of the Respondents on the Katarungang Pambarangay

**On the Creation of the KP.** It is evident that the respondents were "Much Aware" regarding the creation of KP in their respective barangays with a mean rating of 4.01 ("High").

**On the Qualification of the Members.** The respondents were "Much Aware" on the qualification of the members of the KP with a mean rating of 4.01, described as "High."

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data gathered, the researcher obtained the following salient findings:

### 1. Socio Demographic Profile of the Respondents

**On Age.** A great percentage of the respondents (74 or 27.4%) are 31-40 years old.

**On Sex.** Majority of the respondents are males (177 or 65.6%).

**On Civil Status.** Great majority of the respondents are married (206 or 76.3%).



**On Implementing Rules of the KP.** The respondents were “**Much Aware**” on the implementing rules of the KP with a mean rating of 4.02 described as “**High**.”

**On Cases Covered by the KP.** The respondents are “**Very Much Aware**” on cases covered by the KP with a mean rating of 4.32 described as “**Very High**.”

**On Rules during the Mediation and Implementation of KP.** The respondents are “**Much Aware**” on the rules during mediation and implementation of the KP with a mean rating of 4.16 described as “**High**.”

**On the Procedures in Solving Cases and Conflicts.** The respondents are “**Much Aware**” on the procedures in solving cases and conflicts with a mean rating of 4.19 described as “**High**.”

### 3. Relationship between the Extent of Awareness on the Katarungang Pambarangay and the Profile of the Respondents.

There is a significant relationship on the extent of awareness on the KP on age, sex, highest educational attainment, number of years residing in barangay, and number of trainings and seminars attended. Other factor like civil status failed to attend significant relationship on the extent of awareness of KP among the selected barangays in Metro Vigan.

### 4. Significant Difference in the Extent of Awareness on the KP between and among the Municipalities

There is a significant difference on the extent of awareness of the respondents on the Katarungang Pambarangay along with qualification of the members of the KP, creation of the KP, implementing rules of the KP. This is supported by the obtained overall F-ratio value ( $F=6.690$ ) which is significant at .05 probability level. Specifically, there are significant differences along the following:

**On the Creation of the KP.** Extent of awareness on the KP of respondents from Vigan reflected a significant difference with respondents from San Vicente and Sta. Catalina supported by the mean difference of .463 and .648 respectively which is significant at .05 probability level. Similarly respondents from Caoayan reflected a significant difference on the awareness on the KP with the respondents from Sta. Catalina supported by the mean difference of .463 which is significant at .05 probability level. Likewise respondents from Bantay reflected also a significant difference on the extent of awareness on the KP from the respondents in Sta. Catalina supported by a mean difference of -.463 which is significant at .05 probability level. This implies that respondents from Vigan, Caoayan, and Bantay are much aware particularly on the creation of the KP compared to those respondents from the municipalities of San Vicente and Sta. Catalina.

**On the Qualifications of the Members.** Extent of awareness on the KP of respondents from Vigan reflected a significant difference with respondents from Bantay, San Vicente and Sta. Catalina supported by the mean difference of .389 and .537 and .675

respectively which is significant at .05 probability level. Likewise respondents from Caoayan reflected a significant difference on the awareness on the KP with the respondents from Sta. Catalina supported by the mean difference of .453 which is significant at .05 probability level. This implies that respondents from Vigan and Caoayan are much aware and knowledgeable on the KP particularly on the qualification of the members of the Lupon compared to the municipalities of Bantay, San Vicente, and Sta. Catalina.

**On the Implementing rules of the KP.** The extent of awareness on the KP of respondents from Vigan reflected a significant difference with respondents from San Vicente and Sta. Catalina supported by the mean difference of .370 and .481 respectively which is significant at .05 probability level. This implies that respondents from Vigan are much aware and knowledgeable particularly on the implementing rules of the KP compared to the municipalities of San Vicente and Sta. Catalina.

### 5. Experiences of both Parties during the Proceedings

The most common problems encountered during the mediation and conciliation proceedings are hard-headedness and lack of cooperation between the complainants and respondents. Most of the parties involved during the proceedings were not following the notices and summons issued by the Lupon.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Most of the respondents are adult, majority are male and married, and most of them hold a college degree, majority have been residing in their respective barangay for more than 9 years and majority of them have no trainings and seminars attended.
2. The respondent's extent of awareness on Katarungang Pambarangay is “**High**” as a whole.
3. There is a significant relationship on the extent of awareness on the KP on age, sex, highest educational attainment, number of years residing in Barangay, and number of trainings, seminars attended.
4. There is a significant difference on the extent of awareness of the respondents on the Katarungang Pambarangay along with qualification of the members of the KP, creation of the KP, implementing rules of the KP. There is significant difference on the extent of awareness on the pairs of respondents between and among the municipalities of Metro Vigan.
5. The most common problems encountered during the mediation and conciliation proceedings are hard-headedness and lack of cooperation between the complainants and respondents. Most of the parties involved during the proceedings were not following the notices and summons issued by the Lupon.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher strongly recommends the following:

1. Members of the Lupon should undergo training programs and seminars to update themselves on the provision of the law.
2. The presence of the Katarungang Pambarangay and the composition of different committees must be informed to the community through information dissemination and that community must maintain “**High**” awareness or improve it to “**Very Much Aware**”, on the existence of KP law and its structural mechanisms.
3. Members of the Katarungang Pambarangay in cases involving their families or relatives must not be biased in the resolution of cases.
4. Cases to be resolved should be properly studied by the members of the Lupon chaired by the Barangay Chairman and all the members before the case is deliberated in the presence of both parties involved.
5. The College of Criminal Justice Education should conduct extension activities particularly seminars on the awareness of KP law especially to barangays in which the residents were not knowledgeable on the KP law and the law that governs it.
6. Further study should focus on the systematic resolution of cases that is based on the law and that is fair and acceptable to all people concerned.

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