



## Harmonizing community justice: Evaluating the effectiveness of Katarungang Pambarangay in Bacnotan, La Union

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### ABSTRACT

This research intends to assess the level of implementation, performance, and compliance in a subset of barangays, as well as awareness of the Katarungang Pambarangay (KP) system in some barangays of Bacnotan, La Union, Philippines. Of the survey conducted, a total of 6,005 respondents participated, in which the respondents include members of the Lupong Tagapamayapa, Pangkat Tagapagkasundo, and Sangguniang Barangay. From the determination of the sample size, the Slovin method was applied using a 5% marginal error. Results showed that all the barangays have highly implemented the KP system, with Barangay Ortega achieving an 'excellent' implementation score of 3.99. The result thus indicated good performance of the system in acceptance around 3.50, an indicator that the community education and conflict resolution were effective. The subsequence of the KP processes were also graded, especially in matters concerning the processing of complaints, sending out summonses, conciliation, and support of unresolved matters in court. Lower compliance with physical and infrastructure difficulties, however, was noted in Barangay Arosip. The success of the KP system between the authorities and people of the community was attributed to the high degree of knowledge about the system. On the other hand, the level of knowledge was found to be lower in Barangay Arosip, most likely because of the cultural setting that characterizes this barangay and its tendency to rely fully upon the traditional mechanisms in place to solve conflicts. In conclusion, the KP system of Bacnotan, La Union, is a system required in the promotion of access to local justice, law, and order. Even though it is very effective, it would be to make some improvements for its application in the other localities. It will ensure the system that remains viable to improve the community's education programs and institutionalize the use of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in the formal KP structures.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Local justice based in the communities has been the basic, in the roots, the fiber of society at different places around the world, in cases of dispute and conflict resolution. These systems are most characterized by accessibility elements, cultural sensitivity, and fitting within restorative justice principles. The Katarungang Pambarangay, or Barangay Justice System in the Philippines, is a classic case of devices tailored for the promotion of peace and order in barangays, the smallest administrative divisions of the country.

As such, Katarungang Pambarangay is truly part and parcel of the Filipino tradition; it embodies values of pakikisama (cooperation) and bayanihan (community spirit). This is overt proof of the country's commitment to resolve differences through dialog, mediation, or conciliation as the case may require, but not through a court of law. Under the Local Government Code of 1991 (Republic Act No. 7160), the system is a roadmap toward an amicable forum for dispute resolution at the community level, thereby lessening a great deal of weight over the shoulders of the judiciary and encouraging a sense of community and mutual understanding.

Its potency, however, is deficient in most regions and communities, although it forms an integral part of the Philippine legal framework. This variance is attributed to several factors, which include the level of implementation, efforts by the barangay officials, adherence to legal procedures, and the knowledge of the system by the community. This study, therefore, aims to evaluate the same in the selected barangays of the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union—a context that provides a unique context to understand the dynamics of community-based justice.

The paper has measured the degree of Katarungang Pambarangay implementation through how the system was operationalized in practice. This would involve looking at the mechanisms in place for dispute resolution, the level of resource provision for such functioning, and general adherence to the guideline provisions stipulated within the Local Government Code. The other area of study is the effectiveness of the barangay officials in overseeing the process of dispute resolution. This is usually in the dimension of competency, neutrality, and commitment to the values of the system.

Compliance with legal procedures is a cornerstone of Katarungang Pambarangay's legitimacy and fairness. The same will evaluate the extent to which the laid-down procedures in the Local Government Code, such as the issuance of summons, execution of mediation sessions, and documentation of settlements, have been adhered to. It will also aim to gauge the level of awareness by the community on Katarungang Pambarangay. This is because of the effectiveness of the system that exists very much in how the community is aware of its goals and procedures, further, in their readiness to interact with it.

This will focus the research on selected barangays of the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union, which provides a unique context for the appreciation of the dynamics of community-based justice. Bacnotan is selected due to its varying demographic and economic background that could offer mixtures of agricultural and urbanized areas. These heterogeneities make Bacnotan a microcosm of the larger challenges and opportunities that rural communities face in implementing community-based justice systems. This study now aims to find these dynamics and how they impact the effectiveness of the Katarungang Pambarangay for important lessons on how these systems are engaged with and perceived in the communities.

This study will add to the literature of the contribution of providing a complete assessment of Katarungang Pambarangay in a specified rural area, where the dynamics of community-based justice may be different from that of the center or urban areas. This study will target filling gaps in understanding how the system works in practice, the challenges it faces, and the impact it causes to the communities it serves. It is hereby the study that this paper seeks to determine the effectiveness of Katarungang Pambarangay in Bacnotan, La Union, particularly. It, therefore, seeks to establish the different factors and issues that determine the effectiveness of Katarungang Pambarangay or not and suggests the way forward for strengthening its operations.

In summary, this introduction gives a good base of the deep revelation of Katarungang Pambarangay in the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union. This paper posits the broad problem of research, broad objectives, and defines the significance to set forth the broad background that necessitates a comprehensive investigation into the effectiveness of this vital community-based justice system in the Philippines.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

It must be noted that the design followed a quantitative research approach, which is known to be very distinct from qualitative research because the earlier amply gives emphasis on giving a formal and rigid structure in data collection and analysis. The method of research, which attempts to measure the variables and to generalize the populations under study is a very effective method. In this study, the evaluation of the current status of the Katarungang Pambarangay administration in some barangays of Bacnotan, La Union was conducted using a quantitative approach.

Survey questionnaires are one of the key variables of quantitative research in garnering primary data. Surveys are manageable tools for data gathering to mobilize a wide-ranging audience that is there to measure adherence, performance, compliance, and knowledge of Katarungang Pambarangay. This research instrument, therefore, fully encompasses all of the questions as defined in ensuring that data received are consistent, hence better comparison and analysis of the answers. This is a clear indication that a quantitative research approach is suitable here as it gives a structured way of the collection and analysis of data. It must be ensured that the objectives will be quantified and that elements of the Katarungang Pambarangay system. The use of statistical methodologies in this process will prove helpful to investigate the collected data in a proper and unbiased manner in an attempt to comprehend the efficiency of the system.

### **Locale, population and duration of the study**

This study will be conducted in several selected barangays of Bacnotan, La Union, such as Barangay Arosip, Barangay Ortega, and Barangay Nagsimbaanan. To be specific, the barangays where this study is to be conducted are randomly chosen so as to best offer representation of different communities of people resident in the municipality of Bacnotan.

Members of the study population include the Lupong Tagapamayapa, Pangkat Tagapagkasundo, Sangguniang Barangay (Committee on Peace and Order and Public Safety), and citizens belonging to any of the selected barangays. These LGUs to be chosen for this study represent a combined population count of 6,005, somehow translating in spectrum across the wide age groups of both feminine, masculine genders and persons coming from different socio-economic backgrounds.

Time in collecting and analyzing the data determined the length of research. The researcher exerted enough time to ensure that the process of data gathering is thorough. The time was not added burden in providing time for the respondents to complete their questions in the survey. The time was affected by the availability of the respondents and practical constraints of conducting research on several barangays. The researchers take care to be representative by proper selection of the region, population, and by right timing, the study for the right length of time. Useful insights can be had from its administration and effectiveness.

### **Reliability and Validity Testing**

The questionnaire underwent a thorough validation procedure to confirm its reliability and validity. Initial testing included pilot research, which aided in enhancing the questions for better clarity and relevancy. The instrument underwent further evaluation by professionals in local government and community justice, including a certified

criminologist and a DILG Provincial Director, to confirm the accuracy and relevance of its content. Their input played a crucial role in completing the survey, guaranteeing that it comprehensively included all aspects of the Katarungang Pambarangay system. Reliability was evaluated using a test-retest procedure, which ensured consistent findings when the questionnaire was administered many times.

### **Sampling Design**

The collected data strived more to be sample strategy-based so that it accurately mirrors the population of interest handled for the same to be pragmatically saving the expenditure. A sampling approach was indispensable due to the total population of 6,005 persons of the chosen barangays of Bacnotan, La Union.

The sample size for each barangay's inhabitants was calculated using Slovin's method with a 5% margin of error.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

where:

n= sample size

N= total population

e = marginal error (0.05 alpha level)

The choice of this method aims to come up with a scientifically determined sample size that strikes a compromise between accuracy and practical research limits. This has thereby not sampled the small sized members of the Lupong Tagapamayapa, Pangkat Tagapagkasundo, and Sangguniang Barangay. A census method is used in this research study; it includes all the members to ensure thorough coverage with these important groups.

This properly ensured that the respondents' distribution could reflect the relative distribution of whoever the population among the barangays for fair representations in the research could be. This approach, in this way, ensured that it could be put into accurate use to figure out the effectiveness, compliance, awareness, responses, in relation to the implementation of the Katarungang Pambarangay system within different community settings. The objective of this study will be to blend statistical rigor with practical practicality, translating to the use of the systematic sampling method to assure trustworthy and contextually relevant results in the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union. Thus, the study would balance statistical rigor and practicality by designing a systematic sampling design to assure the reliability of the study and make coherent sense in the context of the research in Bacnotan, La Union.

### **Data collection and instrumentation**

The study will be guided by the conceptual framework covering the descriptive survey research design wherein a self-administered questionnaire will be developed to attune and solicit specific data on the level of implementation, performance, compliance, and awareness of the Katarungang Pambarangay system in the selected Barangays of Bacnotan, La Union. The formulation of questions by the researchers followed the related literature and objectives of the present study. Generally, the survey questions were framed with an aim to include both closed-ended questions reflecting and culling quantitative data and open-ended questions that are meant to provide it with qualitative responses.

The answers were subdivided according to the different aspects of the Katarungang Pambarangay under consideration. The Level of Implementation and Performance was mostly concerned with the procedure followed how well it worked for conflict settlement as set out by the Lupong Tagapamayapa. The degree of compliance was judged in terms of-prescriptiveness in rules and regulations. The second class of questions is at the level of awareness. That is, the knowledge of the Katarungang Pambarangay system and the other responsibilities entailed in the system, which includes the inhabitants and authorities.

The questionnaire went through a developing process whereby data validity, reliability, and authenticity were tested. Consultations of the questionnaires were made with experts in the field like the certified criminologist and the

DILG Provincial Director. To take and be understood by the participants: Information was sought from the four Punong Barangays from the selected sample Barangays as a test on the instrument, and to also bring more life into the same, meaning they played an important part in improving the questioner.

In all the ten selected barangays, questionnaires were issued to the chosen respondents for data collection. The researchers went through the process of guiding them on how to answer the questionnaires and assured the respondents that their answer confessions in the questionnaire would remain confidential. Contacting the respondents again was necessary to ensure the return rates to be higher and the data accuracy in regard to the research.

All data that will be collected by the situational surveys will be tabulated and analyzed for the conduct of the Katarungang Pambarangay System in Bacnotan, La Union. The employment of systematic questionnaires gave the research in-depth and standardized data across all the covered barangays, now giving strong bases to the researcher in the delineation of findings and recommendations of the study.

### **Ethical Consideration**

The researchers first sought formal permission from Punong Barangay and the Municipal Mayor of the Selected Barangays in the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union, for conducting this research. The researchers submitted the communication letter from the adopted barangays in the municipality of Bacnotan, La Union. Letters of request seeking the approval of research were signed by the research advisor with the concurrence of the Academic Dean of the College of Legal and Criminal Justice Education addressed to the Municipal Mayor and Punong Barangay. A letter includes how many copies of information are needed for the study including the population data about the barangay and the grand total of Lupon members with such breakdown down to the specific number of Barangay Officials.

Furthermore, with the assessment on the level of implementation, the level of performance, the level of compliance, and the level of awareness in the implementation of the Katarungang Pambarangay in the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union, the researcher maintained focus on the goals and objectives of this study. Questions to this

Since the data will be collected through a survey, invariably, first and foremost priority is vested for the protection of the people's privacy within the framework of this quantitative research. The considerations are a) Involvement should be voluntary; for that, respondents are to give their complete permission and willingness. b) Information to be kept confidential: no information can be used for any other reason other than research. c) Integrity, where there is assurance that the researchers will deliver all the commitments and any promise granted by the responding participants. The components capture the integrity of the data collection process. The researcher assures that all information compiled from other authors' intellects, derived from books, research papers, dissertations, among other authentic sources, will be effectively cited and easily identified, with greatest privacy ensured.

### **Results and Discussion**

#### **The Implementation of Katarungang Pambarangay on Selected Barangays in the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union**

The analysis of the Katarungang Pambarangay implementation in individual barangays of Bacnotan, La Union, as shown in Table 1, demonstrated a remarkable level of execution across several parameters. The chart highlights the significance of fair and unbiased treatment by Lupon tagapamayapa, as shown by the highest weighted mean score of 3.82. This score illustrates the mediators' commitment to impartiality and equity in resolving conflicts, in line with the principles of Retributive Justice Theory, which emphasizes holding criminals accountable and promoting reparative activities, as explained by Karp (2020). This method not only establishes confidence and credibility within the community but also supports the wider goals of promoting peace and resolving issues in a friendly manner.

Table 1. Evaluation of Katarungang Pambarangay Implementation in Selected Barangays of Bacnotan, La Union

Indicators	BP	BN	BO	BA	WM	Interpretation
1. The Lupon Tagapamayapa treat their clients fair and just.	3.86	3.71	4.00	3.72	3.82	Highly Implemented
2. The Lupon Tagapamayapa follows the prescribed time for the mediation/conciliation period.	3.85	3.53	3.98	3.40	3.69	Highly Implemented
3. The Lupon Tagapamayapa understands the objectives of Katarungang Pambarangay.	3.85	3.80	3.98	3.26	3.72	Highly Implemented
4. The Lupon Tagapamayapa have proper training in implementing Katarungang Pambarangay.	3.85	3.73	4.00	3.22	3.70	Highly Implemented
5. The Lupon Tagapamayapa supports the implementation of peace and order in the community.	3.83	3.58	3.97	3.24	3.65	Highly Implemented
6. The Lupon Tagapamayapa conducts a monthly meeting exclusively on Katarungang Pambarangay matters.	3.82	3.51	3.97	3.00	3.57	Highly Implemented
7. The Lupon Tagapamayapa keeps a systematic recording and filing of Katarungang Pambarangay documents.	3.81	3.47	4.00	3.00	3.57	Highly Implemented
8. The Lupon Tagapamayapa coordinates with the proper agencies	3.80	3.60	4.00	3.24	3.66	Highly Implemented
9. The Lupon Tagapamayapa helps in declogging cases in Trial Court	3.85	3.47	4.00	3.28	3.65	Highly Implemented
Average Mean	3.84	3.60	3.99	3.26	3.67	Highly Implemented

Legend:

BP – Barangay Poblacion

BN – Barangay Nagsimbaanan

BO – Baragnay Ortega

BA – Barangay Arosip

WM – Weighted Meat

In addition, Lupon Tagapamayapa's comprehension of the objectives of Katarungang Pambarangay and their extensive training, as shown by weighted mean scores of 3.72 and 3.70, respectively, demonstrate that this group is competent and well informed and capable of efficiently handling conflicts within the community. Planning is essential for ensuring the effectiveness of the community-based justice system, guaranteeing that resolutions are just, efficient, and promote communal cohesion.

Nevertheless, Table 1 also highlights several aspects that might be improved, such as the frequency of specialized gatherings and the methodical organization and archiving of documents. Improving these elements might result in increased effectiveness and clarity within Katarungang Pambarangay, reinforcing its position as a crucial element of the local judicial system.

The extensive ramifications of these discoveries are substantial. This statement emphasizes the importance of Katarungang Pambarangay in promoting community trust and togetherness, as well as its role in reducing the workload of the court system. Community-level conflict resolution effectively alleviates the strain on courts in accordance with concerns about judicial delays and the effectiveness of alternative dispute settlement methods, as described by Khan et al. (2020). Moreover, the information obtained from Table 1 may be used to make specific enhancements in policy and training programs, thus strengthening Katarungang Pambarangay's ability to arbitrate conflicts and successfully promote peace and order.

To summarize, the assessment shown in Table 1 validates the successful execution of Katarungang Pambarangay in Bacnotan, La Union, with an overall weighted average of 3.67. The system's efficacy is shown by its commitment to principles of justice, comprehensive mediator training, and a profound comprehension of its aims. To increase its effectiveness and impact, it is important to address the areas that need development. This will strengthen Katarungang Pambarangay's crucial position in the local justice system and its contribution to community peace and the overall judicial framework.

**Level of Performance of Katarungang Pambarangay in the Selected Barangays in the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union.**

Table 2. Performance Assessment of Katarungang Pambarangay Across Selected Barangays in Bacnotan, La Union

Indicators	BP	BN	BO	BA	WM	Interpretation
1. The Lupong Tagapamayapa and/or Pagkat Tagapagkasundo possess the required qualification	3.88	3.53	3.79	3.26	3.62	Very Satisfactory
2. The Lupon Tagapamayapa/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo conduct an information education campaign to raise public works.	3.81	3.49	3.97	3.45	3.68	Very Satisfactory
3. Quantity of settled cases.	3.81	3.62	3.74	3.37	3.64	Very Satisfactory
4. Quality of settlement dispute.	3.81	3.56	3.75	3.39	3.63	Very Satisfactory
5. Compliance terms of settlement.	3.82	3.62	3.98	3.33	2.94	Very Satisfactory
Average Mean	3.83	3.56	3.85	3.36	3.50	Very Satisfactory

Legend:

BP – Barangay Poblacion  
BA – Barangay Arosip

BN – Barangay Nagsimbaanan  
WM – Weighted Mean

BO – Barangay Ortega

Table 2 presents the effectiveness of Katarungang Pambarangay on several barangays in Bacnotan, La Union. It specifically examines the ability of the Lupon tagapamayapa to resolve disputes. The information education campaign conducted by Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo was the most effective project, as shown by its top weighted mean of 3.68. This demonstrates a very acceptable degree of public awareness efforts. This implies that Katarungang Pambarangay takes aggressive measures to educate the community of its presence and operations. Conversely, the element that has the lowest weighted mean, which is 2.94, pertains to adherence to settlement conditions. This indicates difficulties in reaching an agreement despite attempts to raise awareness. The community's perception of Katarungang Pambarangay's dispute resolution activities may be considered good, as shown by the overall average score of 3.50.

Thanh Nga's 2022 research in Vietnam focuses on the growing presence of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) in an environment where mediation has a long-standing tradition. The study underlines the newness of ADR practices and the limited awareness of these methods, particularly in commercial contracts. This research suggests the need for clearer instructions to be provided to attorneys when creating alternative dispute resolution (ADR) provisions. It also proposes that the Vietnamese Bar Association and other legal organizations prioritize professional training programs that concentrate on improving contract writing skills. The "Mediation Guideline Notes" of the International Chamber of Commerce are a valuable resource available to everyone, regardless of their ICC membership status.

The significance of an individual's adherence to societal standards in deterring unlawful behavior is elucidated by Travis Hirschi's social control theory. This research asserts that Katarungang Pambarangay serves as a crucial tool for maintaining peace among communities by efficiently settling disagreements, therefore diminishing the probability of legal violations. The efficacy of conflict resolution carried out by the Lupon tagapamayapa has a direct impact, either good or bad, on the level of public confidence in their approach.

**Level of Compliance of Katarungang Pambarangay on Selected Barangays in the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union.**

Table 3. Compliance level of Katarungang Pambarangay on the selected barangays in the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union, in terms of complaints.

Indicators	BP N= 238	BN N = 45	BO N = 71	BA N =55	WM	DER
1. The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo observe the Katarungang Pambarangay process	3.84	3.64	4.00	3.36	3.71	HC
2. The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo follow the process of dispute resolution.	3.81	3.49	3.75	3.22	3.58	HC
3. The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo treat all the records secured.	3.84	3.64	4.00	3.02	3.63	HC
4. The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo observe proper compliance in terms of settlements.	3.84	3.44	4.00	3.28	3.64	HC
5. The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo follows the procedures of dispute resolution.	3.86	3.47	4.00	3.36	3.67	HC
Average Mean	3.84	3.54	3.95	3.25	3.65	HC

Legends:

BP- Barangay Poblacion BO- Barangay Ortega BN- Barangay Nagsimbaanan BA- Barangay Arosip  
 DER- Descriptive Equivalent Rating HC- Highly Complied

Table 3 shows that the overall mean compliance level of Katarungang Pambarangay in selected barangays in the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union, was 3.65, with a highly compliant descriptive equivalent rating. This means that the Katarungang Pambarangay of each barangay agreed that proper attention should be given to receiving complaints from the community. The Katarungang Pambarangay Process had the highest mean for the Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo, with a 3.71 rating. The lowest mean is for The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo following the process of dispute resolution”, with a rating of 3.58.

Table 3 shows indicators number 1. Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo observe the Katarungang Pambarangay process”, 5. Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo follow the procedures of dispute resolution”, and 4. Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo observe proper compliance in terms of settlements and have the highest average weighted means.

This is supported by the study of Gonzales (2022), which claims that the nation's strategy for resolving disputes does not seek institutionalization, at least not beyond enhancing the capabilities of regional groups that promote peace. Local authorities receive a significant amount of government funding and have more discretion in their decision-making, which includes adhering to strict evidentiary criteria. The barangay Lupon Tagapamayapa has access to more courts than other higher formal courts, which enables it to hear more cases and react to local communities' requests for case resolution more quickly. In addition, according to Pila (2021), Katarungang Pambarangay is the procedure used to preserve community unity and enhance poor people's access to justice. It is encouraged to continue intensifying information dissemination on the principles of the Law on Dispute Settlement to raise people's awareness of the law's purposes and goals, thereby inspiring them to understand its significance and perform civic responsibility.



Table 4. Compliance level of Katarungang Pambarangay on the selected barangays in the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union, in terms of the issuance of summons.

Indicators	BP	BN	BO	BA	WM	DER
1. The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo requires the other party who did not appear to explain.	3.82	3.56	4.00	3.10	3.68	HC
2. The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo issues notice of hearing to the complainants.	3.80	3.62	4.00	3.34	3.69	HC
3. The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo issues summons to the respondents.	3.81	3.56	4.00	3.38	3.69	HC
4. The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo issue of subpoena to the witness if any to attend the hearing	3.82	3.58	3.75	3.30	3.62	HC
5. The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo summon a party/person with respect.	3.80	3.64	3.74	3.32	3.62	HC
Average Mean	3.81	3.59	3.90	3.29	3.66	HC

Legends:

BP- Barangay Poblacion    BO- Barangay Ortega    BN- Barangay Nagsimbaanan    BA- Barangay Arosip  
 DER- Descriptive Equivalent Rating    HC- Highly Complied

Table 4 shows that the overall mean compliance level of Katarungang Pambarangay in selected Barangays in the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union, is 3.66, which means that the community is highly aware that the Katarungang Pambarangay of each barangay is receiving proper attention in the issuance of summon from the community.

The highest mean is The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo issues notice of hearing to the complainants and The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo issues summons to the respondent having the same rating of 3.69. The lowest mean is for The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo, an issue of subpoena, to the witness, if any, to attend hearing and for The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo summon, a party/person with respect. The participants had the same rating of 3.62, with a highly compliant descriptive equivalent rating.

In regard to the issuance of summon Table 4, indicators 2 and 3 both had the same average weighted mean of 3.69, which was interpreted as Highly Complied. The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo requires that the other party who did not appear to explain (Indicator 1) display an average weighted mean of 3.68, interpreted as Highly Complied. Last, both the Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo issue of subpoena to the witness, if any, to attend hearing and the Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo summon, a party/person, had the same weighted average mean of 3.62.

This one is supported by the study of Ferguson and Strang (2017), as to the Level of Compliance of Katarungang Pambarangay in the selected barangays of the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union, states that a summon is issued to the responder and the victim so that both parties are gathered with the Lupon Tagapamayapa to come up with a solution so that the case will not worsen and to maintain peacefulness in the community.

Table 5. Levels of Compliance of Katarungang Pambarangay on Selected Barangays in the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union, in terms of Conductions of Conciliation

indicators	BP	BN	BO	BA	WM	DER
1. The venue of the conciliation is clean and free from	3.83	3.58	3.79	3.44	3.66	HC

	distraction.						
2.	Fair treatment of the Pangkat Tagapagkasundo in the issuance of summoning.	3.82	3.47	4.00	3.32	3.65	HC
3.	The Pangkat Tagapagkasundo response immediately in giving conciliation to the disputing party.	3.83	3.47	3.77	3.30	3.60	HC
4.	The Pangkat Tagapagkasundo members observe the proper procedure in the settlement of disputes.	3.83	3.38	3.77	3.32	3.58	HC
5.	They observe settlement deadlines and a systematic arrangement of records.	3.83	3.51	3.98	3.30	3.66	HC
	Average Mean	3.83	3.48	3.86	3.34	3.63	HC

Legends:

BP- Barangay Poblacion    BO- Barangay Ortega    BN- Barangay Nagsimbaanan    BA- Barangay Arosip

DER- Descriptive Equivalent Rating    HC- Highly Complied

Table 5 shows that the overall mean Compliance of Katarungang Pambarangay on the Selected Barangays in the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union, is 3.63, with a highly compliant descriptive equivalent rating, which means that the community is highly aware that the Katarungang Pambarangay of each barangay is properly conducting conciliation.

The greatest mean is that the venue of the conciliation is clean and free from distraction, and they observe settlement deadlines and a systematic arrangement of records, having the same rating of 3.66 interpreted as Highly Complied. This implies that the Katarungang Pambarangay are considering the venue appropriately to the conflicts of the parties as well as strictly following the said deadline for the settlement of both parties, followed by arranging the records systematically and confidentially. The lowest weighted mean is for the Pangkat Tagapagkasundo members who observe the proper procedure in the settlement of disputes”, with a rating of 3.58, interpreted as Highly Complied. This implies that Lupong Tagapamayapa is strictly implementing proper procedures for solving the conflicts of the parties to avoid misunderstanding of the parties regarding their conflicts to avoid making the conflicts even worse.

This explains social control theory, which states that Lupong Tagapamayapa's strategies/processes can either positively or negatively affect the results or settlement of disputes. The result of settling a case will determine the behavior of the residents if they are going to trust the process of Lupong Tagapamayapa in solving a conflict. Implementing proper procedures for settling disputes will help the parties trust Lupong Tagapamayapa or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo.

Table 6 shows that the overall mean compliance level of Katarungang Pambarangay in selected Barangays in the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union, is 3.82, with a highly compliant descriptive equivalent rating, which means that the community is highly aware that the Katarungang Pambarangay of each barangay is giving proper endorsement of unsettled cases to the Court of the community.

The highest means are “The Lupong Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo endorse properly the case” and “The Lupong Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo observe proper endorsement of cases to the concerned agencies”, with the same rating of 3.84 interpreted as “Highly Complied”. The lowest mean is “The Lupong Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo observe the procedural process”, with a rating of 3.79 interpreted as Highly Complied, and The Lupong Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo observe proper venue”, with a rating of 3.80 interpreted as “Highly Complied.

Table 6. The level of Compliance of Katarungang Pambarangay in Selected Barangays in the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union, in terms of Endorsement of Unsettled Cases to the Court

Indicators	BP	BN	BO	BA	WM	DER
1. The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo observe proper endorsement of cases	3.84	3.67	4.00	3.84	3.84	HC

	to the concerned agencies.									
2.	The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Tagapagkasundo endorse properly the case.	Pangkat	3.86	3.67	3.98	3.86	3.84	HC		
3.	The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Tagapagkasundo observe proper venues.	Pangkat	3.82	3.56	3.98	3.82	3.80	HC		
4.	The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Tagapagkasundo observe jurisdictional processes.	Pangkat	3.83	3.56	4.00	3.83	3.81	HC		
5.	The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Tagapagkasundo observe procedural process.	Pangkat	3.84	3.51	3.97	3.84	3.79	HC		
6.	The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Tagapagkasundo provides information to the complainants and respondents about Katarungang Pambarangay Law.	Pangkat	3.83	3.64	3.97	3.83	3.82	HC		
7.	The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Tagapagkasundo use a language/dialect that understandable by both parties.	Pangkat	3.85	3.60	4.00	3.85	3.83	HC		
	Average Mean		3.84	3.60	3.99	3.84	3.82	HC		

**Legends:**

BP- Barangay Poblacion      BO- Barangay Ortega      BN- Barangay Nagsimbaanan      BA- Barangay Arosip  
 DER- Descriptive Equivalent Rating      HC- Highly Complied

This explains the study of Agustin (2018), which states that the duty of the Lupon is to ensure that all disagreements brought before they are conciliated through suitable mediation or arbitration to measure the effectiveness of the Lupon Tagapamayapa in the administration of their duties as conciliators in the conflicts of their fellow community members and to assess whether the existence of the Lupon is resolutely structured in accordance with the governing laws from the subject Lupon Tagapamayapa. This implies that the unsettled cases in Katarungang Pambarangay are still being processed with proper procedures in filing into proper endorsement of the case. The duty of Lupon Tagapamayapa is not only to settle disputes but also to bring unsettled cases to proper endorsement agencies.

Tables 3–6 show the compliance of Katarungang Pambarangay with the selected barangays in the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union. Based on the computed weighted mean of the respondents, the results of the study revealed that all of the indicators are highly relevant. This implies that the Katarungang Tagapamayapa in the Selected Barangays in the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union, complies with the process of receiving complaints, the issuance of summons, the conduct of conciliation, and the endorsement of unsettled cases to the court. According to the study of Lupao et al. (2022), the main objective of the Barangay Justice System or Katarungang Pambarangay is to informally settle cases through Lupon members acting as mediators. Mediators do not apply the rule of criminal law, but they are to facilitate harmonious settlement through the agreement of both parties. Personal interviews of the Lupon members were used as the data gathering instrument. The traditional concept of amicable settlement under the Barangay Justice System is still applicable even in this modern world; however, it is limited by the ability of the implementers to handle different behaviors of disputants, which requires logical innovative approaches that are convincing to the senses of the disputants to achieve peaceful settlement.

In addition, the appointment of Lupon members from different sectors is an advantage, as they are a combination of different professions with different skills and experiences that fit the varied personalities and profiles of disputants. Moreover, the need to gain the trust and confidence among the Lupon members by the disputant is important

**Awareness Levels of Katarungang Pambarangay in the Selected Barangays in the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union**

Table 7. Awareness Levels of Katarungang Pambarangay in the Selected Barangays in the Municipality of Bacnotan, La Union

Indicators	BP	BN	BO	BA	WM	DER
1. The members of Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo enforce the law without bias.	3.83	3.53	3.75	3.72	3.71	VA
2. The members of Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo respect the opinion of the disputing parties.	3.81	3.44	3.75	3.30	3.56	VA
3. Keeping privacy by having a facility exclusively used for dispute settlement.	3.81	3.47	3.77	3.52	3.64	VA
4. The members of the Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo are friendly and approachable.	3.83	3.51	3.77	3.34	3.59	VA
5. The members of Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo are dedicated to their work.	3.82	3.51	3.77	3.24	3.59	VA
6. The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo work as a team that encourages innovative thinking.	3.80	3.49	3.77	3.32	3.60	VA
7. The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo manage their time correctly and use the resources properly.	3.79	3.49	3.97	3.28	3.63	VA
8. The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo members take responsibility in settling disputes on time.	3.79	3.51	3.80	2.86	3.49	VA
9. Pangkat Tagapagkasundo members treat the cases that they handle with confidentiality.	3.83	3.56	3.97	3.48	3.71	VA
10. The Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo provides quality and fair services to its constituents.	3.83	3.51	4.00	3.54	3.72	VA
Average Mean	3.81	3.50	3.83	3.36	3.63	VA

Legends:

BP- Barangay Poblacion      BO- Barangay Ortega      BN- Barangay Nagsimbaanan      BA- Barangay Arosip  
 DER- Descriptive Equivalent Rating      VA- Very Aware

Table 7 shows that the overall mean level of awareness of katarungang pambarangay in selected barangays in the municipality of Bacnotan, La Union, is 3.63. This means that the community is highly aware that the Katarungang Pambarangay of each barangay is giving proper attention to tending the complaints of the community.

The Lupon tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat tagapagkasundo provided the most quality and fair services to its constituents, with a 3.72 rating. This implies that Lupon Tagapamayapa implements the rules and regulations of Katarungang Pambarangay by providing fair justice to both parties by providing a solution that is beneficial to both parties. “The members of Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo enforce the law without bias”, and the Pangkat Tagapagkasundo members treat the cases

The three lowest means are 3.49, which implies that the Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo members take responsibility for settling disputes on time. Second, “The members of Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo respect the opinion of the disputing parties with a rating of 3.56; this implies that the Lupon Tagapamayapa considers the opinion of both parties where Lupon Tagapamayapa can get idea on how to create a decision regarding the opinion that was stated by both parties; and last, “The members of the Lupon Tagapagkasundo respect the opinion of the disputing parties and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo are friendly and

approachable and the members of Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo are both parties, and the members of Lupon Tagapamayapa and/or Pangkat Tagapagkasundo have the same rating.

This explains the theory of restorative justice theory, wherein according to Ferguson and Strang (2017), restorative justice programs have a positive impact on reducing offenses. This implies that conflicts between parties should be solved within the community. Dispute resolution allows offenders and victims to develop trust and understanding. In addition, having been aware of and understanding the function of Katarungang Pambarangay will help to resolve disputes between both parties effectively. Lupon Tagapamayapa should be aware of the traits and characteristics of being a mediator and a conciliator in settling disputes.

In addition, this is supported by the study of Glecemae (2021), who stated that the Barangay Justice System, which is claimed to be the primary method of resolving conflicts, provides the disputing parties with a place to look for a solution that is agreeable to all sides. Lupon Tagapamayapa and Pangkat Tagapagkasundo do their duties fairly to both sides, and Lupon Tagapamayapa and Pangkat Tagapagkasundo do not disregard the opinions and other solutions that were provided by both parties.

In conclusion, according to the overall results of this study, only three (3) Barangays had the highest weighted means—Barangay Ortega, Barangay Poblacion, and Barangay Nagsimbaanan—in terms of the level of implementation, level of performance, level of compliance and level of awareness.

At the level of implementation, Barangay Ortega had the highest mean, with an equivalent of 3.99, followed by Barangay Poblacion, with a total weighted mean of 3.84. Finally, Nagsimbaanan had a weighted mean of 3.60, which implies that Katarungang Pambarangay implemented the rules and regulations indicated in the Katarungang Pambarangay Handbook to make the Katarungang Pambarangay more effective in settling a dispute. In addition, the mediators and conciliators are exerting more effort in implementing Katarungang Pambarangay to develop solutions that are beneficial to both parties. Barangay Arosip had the lowest weighted mean, with a total of 3.26, which implies that Barangay Arosip is implementing Katarungang Pambarangay, but there are still shortcomings in its implementation because Barangay Arosip uses traditional way in settling disputes in its barangay, which is why the implementation of Katarungang Pambarangay in Barangay was set aside.

At the level of performance, the top three (3) barangays that had the highest average weighted means were Barangay Ortega, with an equivalent of 3.85; Barangay Poblacion, with 3.83; and Barangay Nagsimbaanan, with 3.56. This finding implies that the lupon tagapamayapa and pagkat tagapagkasund follow and observe their roles and responsibilities, as indicated in the Katarungang Pambarangay Handbook. Barangay Arosip had the lowest weighted mean, with an average of 3.25, which implies that the level of performance of the Lupon Tagapamayapa and Pangkat Tagapagkasundo in Barangay Arosip was lower than that of the top three (3) barangays mentioned above.

At the Compliance Level, the top three (3) Barangays with the highest weighted means are the Barangay Ortega, Barangay Poblacion, and Barangay Nagsimbaanan in terms of receiving complaints, issuing summon, conducting conciliation, and endorsing unsettled cases. This implies that the abovementioned barangays are giving importance in regard to complying with the complaints they receive, issuing a summons to conduct a mediation and endorsing those unsettled cases to proper courts concerning the case. On the other hand, only the Barangay Arosip had the lowest weighted mean of the four (4) Compliance Levels, which implies that due to the geographical area and the road conditions of the Barangay Arosip, it is not easy to go in their Barangay hall to file for a complaint, which is why the Katarungang Pambarangay in Barangay Arosip does not meet to comply with the four (4) Compliance Levels, namely, the issuance of summon, receiving of complaints, conducting conciliations, and endorsing unsettled cases. In addition, one of the reasons is that the conflicts in their barangay were immediately forwarded to their elders to hear the disputes of both parties.

Finally, for the level of awareness, the top three (3) barangays with the highest weighted means are the Barangay Ortega, with an average weighted mean of 3.83; the Barangay Poblacion, with an average weighted mean

of 3.81; and the Barangay Nagsimbaan, with an equivalent average weighted mean of 3.50. This implies that the Barangays are ensuring that the residents of their barangay are fully aware of the purpose of Katarungang Pambarangay and how to work with the community and that the residents are aware of the performance of the Lupon Tagapamayapa and Pangkat Tagapagkasundo in conducting mediation and conciliation to provide an effective solution to disputes between both parties.

In addition, the residents of the three (3) barangays mentioned are fully aware that the mediators and conciliators treat them without bias and provide quality of service. The Barangay Arosip had the lowest weighted mean, with an equivalent of 3.36, which implies that because of the "Inayan Principle", the case that was raised in their community was immediately forwarded to their elders to come up with a solution, which is why the resident in this Barangay is not fully aware of the function of Katarungang Pambarangay. In addition, all patients raised to their elders are immediately settled by their elders, wherein they do not reach the Katarungang Pambarangay to solve it. In addition, the residents of the Barangay Arosip are mostly indigenous people, who strictly follow the traditional way of settling disputes and call this the "Inayan Principle". Elders are considered to be their Lupon Tagapamayapa as well as their Pangkat Tagapagkasundo in settling a dispute, which basically means that all conflicts in the Barangay Arosip are led by their elders to settle their disputes. All of the cases in Barangay Arosip are forwarded to their elders. This is also the reason why the residents of the Barangay Arosip are not fully aware of the function of Katarungang Pambarangay because at the time the case was forwarded to their elders, they immediately solved the case.

This explains the research of Chatoy (2022), who mentioned that the Katarungang Pambarangay observed by the Katarungang Pambarangay in Barangay Amontoc, San Gabriel, La Union, is an Inayan principle in which most localities are guided by the principles of respect, love, and peace toward others, particularly all elders. The Higanon Tribe Justice System serves as the foundation for settling disputes in the tribe community. It is composed of tribal Datu, Inanay/Inamay, and supreme tribal elders who serve as mediators in providing realistic solutions and advice to the disputing parties. The offense will be based on the gravity of the act that was committed. As practiced, the person will be charged with a sanction by means of "manggal" (fine/offense); if the suspect does not meet the victim's demand, the Datu will help in meeting the conditions of the victim. However, the Higanon tribe practiced settling disputes by imposing fines and sanctions because they had no jail.

## **Conclusion**

The goal of the research was to evaluate the Katarungang Pambarangay (KP) system's level of implementation, performance, compliance, and awareness in the chosen barangays of Bacnotan, La Union. The research's conclusions provide a thorough grasp of the performance of the KP system in the area and shed light on areas that still need development.

Barangay Ortega had the highest weighted mean, indicating that the KP system was widely applied across the barangays. This suggests a fervent dedication to the values of justice, extensive training for mediators, and a thorough comprehension of the goals of the system. Barangay Arosip, on the other hand, fell behind, indicating that conventional conflict resolution techniques may still be widely used, which might have an impact on the KP system's complete adoption.

All barangays received highly favorable ratings for the KP system's performance, with Barangay Ortega once again taking the top spot. Lupon Tagapamayapa's capacity to settle conflicts and the proactive steps made to inform the community about the system's existence and functioning demonstrate the system's efficacy. The lower ratings in some measures, however, suggest that there is still room for improvement in terms of guaranteeing that agreements are achieved and followed.

In particular, the areas of accepting complaints, issuing summonses, conducting conciliation, and recommending unresolved cases to court received good ratings for the level of compliance with the KP processes. This high degree of compliance highlights how the system helps to reduce the burden on the justice system while

also fostering community cohesion and confidence. Nevertheless, Barangay Arosip showed lower levels of compliance, possibly as a result of physical and infrastructural barriers that prevent locals from using the KP system.

It was discovered that there was a very high level of awareness of the KP system among authorities and community people. This understanding is essential to the KP system's efficacy since it guarantees that disagreements are submitted to the system for settlement and that both sides have faith in the procedure. However, Barangay Arosip had a lower awareness level, perhaps as a result of Barangay's distinct cultural setting and dependence on conventional conflict resolution techniques.

The results of the research demonstrate how effectively the KP system in Bacnotan, La Union, has generally promoted law and order, accessibility to justice, and peaceful living at the local level. The system's significance in the local justice framework is evident from its high levels of implementation, performance, compliance, and awareness. The report does, however, also highlight areas that need development, namely, in ensuring that customs do not impede the KP system's full usage and that every member of the community is properly informed about and involved with it.

It is advised that attempts be made to include conventional conflict resolution techniques with official KP processes in barangays such as Arosip to improve the efficacy of the KP system. With respect to regional traditions, this integration should ensure that the goals and processes of the KP system are well conveyed and understood. To preserve the system's efficacy and adjust to changing community requirements, Lupon Tagapamayapa members must also receive continual training and capacity-building, in addition to regular community education campaigns.

In conclusion, the Bacnotan, La Union, and Katarungang Pambarangay systems are essential for preserving peace within the community and delivering fair justice. Although the system works well in general, it must be continuously improved and adjusted to local conditions to continue working well. The KP system may continue to be an essential part of the local justice system and improve community well-being by resolving the problems that have been identified and expanding on its advantages.

## **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are for the closure of the identified gap and to ensure proper operation of the KP system and its continuous meeting of the community's needs.

## **Integration of Traditional and Formal Resolution Methods**

1. **Establish Clear Integration Guidelines.** Clear, written guidelines should be developed on how and at what point traditional methods are integrated into the KP process, if they apply. Guidelines should also outline which types of conflicts are amenable to traditional methods of redress, and at what point matters should be escalated in the process to be taken to formal proceedings.
2. **Develop Training Modules for Integration Techniques.** Prepare training modules with relevant samples and effective integration strategies of traditional conflict-resolution techniques along with the formal procedures under the Katarungang Pambarangay. Train through role-playing exercises for the members of Lupon Tagapamayapa to be able to practice integration.

## **Training and Capacity Building**

3. **Regular Refresher Courses.** Implement annual compulsory refresher courses for all Lupon Tagapamayapa to keep them updated with the most recent changes in legal requirements, conflict resolution techniques, and any changes in the national or local legal frameworks.

4. **Proposed Skill-building Workshops.** For instance, there should be workshops on cultural sensitivity, communication, and mediation techniques. Those held are to help the Lupon members acquire skills necessary for them to operate effectively in a community as diverse as Bacnotan.

#### **Community Education and Awareness**

5. **Employ Multiple Communication Avenues.** Conduct an extensive community sensitization campaign through local radio stations, community cable channels, social media channels, and community bulletin boards, with the aim of creating knowledge and understanding of the KP system.
6. **Organize Community Engagement Activities.** Hold regular community forums, workshops, and town hall meetings where residents can be enlightened on the KP system, express their concerns, and offer feedback. These should be interactive so that there can be questions and answers to ensure active community engagement is taking place.

#### **Infrastructure and Accessibility Enhancement**

7. **Upgrade Facilities.** Make physical infrastructures in barangay halls accessible and friendly to all, including persons with disabilities. That the barangay halls should be at the center of locales in such a way that its accessibility is easy from their location is something that could be considered, given the geographical layout of Bacnotan.
8. **Transportation Assistance.** Offer to extend transportation or mobile KP services to barangays situated in remote and hard-to-reach areas to assure that each resident has an easy way to access justice services.

#### **Documentation and Monitoring Improvements**

9. **Enhance Record Keeping.** Use a digitalized system of keeping records to enable the easy process of documentation. The system should be secure, easy to use, and with the ability to keep detailed records of all KP activities and results.
10. **Regular System Evaluation.** The system for the evaluation of the effectiveness of the KP system shall be put in place. The system shall allow for annual audits and performance appraisals to determine compliance with the legal procedures and effectiveness in dispute resolution.

#### **Community Trust and Involvement**

11. **Foster Community Trust.** Develop mechanisms that will work towards building community trust in the KP officials. An example is by enabling transparency reports and community representative feedback sessions. There should be open and two-way dialogue by the KP system and the community it serves.
12. **Promote Active Community Involvement.** Encourage community members to take part in the KP process, not only as disputants but also in roles such as community mediators and advisory capacities. This would help in demystifying the process of KP and integrating it more into the fabric of the community.

These recommendations will, however, need concerted efforts from the local government units, the KP administration, community leaders, and the people of Bacnotan, La Union. It, therefore, goes toward the creation of a more robust and inclusive system for KP in the resolution of conflict and peace promotion within the community, addressing the present weaknesses and further developing upon existing strengths.



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