

Assessment of Mediation of Community-Based Disputes in Selected Barangays of Batangas City

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Abstract : The purpose of this study was to assess the mediation process applied on community-based disputes in the selected barangays of Batangas City, namely: Barangay Sta. Rita Karsada, Barangay Bolbok, and Barangay Alangilan. The researcher initially speculated that the required procedures under Republic Act No. 7160 were not religiously followed and satisfied by the Lupong Tagapamayapa members in most of the barangays in the subject locality and this prompted the researcher to conduct an investigation about this research topic. In this study, the subject barangays and their Lupong members still resorted to mediation processes to amicably settle conflicts among community members. It can also be appreciated among the Lupong Tagapamayapa members that they are aware of the purpose and processes required in the mediation of cases brought before them. However, the manner in which they conduct this mediation processes seems to be dependent on the general characteristics of their respective barangays and of the people situated therein. It also very noticeable that the strategies applied by the Lupong members on these cases depend on the ways and means the parties in dispute may arrive into agreements and conciliations. It is concluded by the researcher that the Lupong Tagapamayapa members in Barangay Sta. Rita Karsada, Barangay Bolbok, and Barangay Alangilan are aware and are applying the objectives and procedures of mediation. Also, the success and failure of the mediation processes applied by the Lupong Tagapamayapa members of the subject barangays on community-based disputes brought before them are generally attributed on the attitude and perspective of the parties in dispute towards the entire process of mediation and not on the capacity or capability of the Lupong members to subject them into amicable settlements. In view of the above, the researcher humbly recommends the following: (1) that the composition of the Lupong Tagapamayapa should include individuals from various sectors of the barangay; (2) that the Lupong Tagapamayapa members should undergo various trainings that may enhance their capability to mediate any type of community-based disputes at the expense of the barangay fund or budget; (3) that the Punong Barangay and the Sangguniang Pambarangay, in their own discretion, should allocate budget that will consistently provide regular honoraria for the Lupong Tagapamayapa members; (4) that the Punong Barangay and the Sangguniang Pambarangay should provide an ideal venue for the hearing of community-based disputes; (5) that the City/ Municipal Governments should allocate necessary financial assistance to the barangays under their jurisdiction in honing eligible Lupong Tagapamayapa members; and (6) that the Punong Barangay and other officials should initiate series of information campaigns for their constituents to be informed on the objectives, advantages, and procedures of mediation.

Keywords : amicable settlement, community-based disputes, dispute resolution, mediation

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