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Research Article

Qualitative Inquiry on Understanding Barangay Governance Through Resident Lenses in Tudela, Misamis Occidental

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to explore the problems encountered by residents of Centro Napu, Tudela, Misamis Occidental in relation to the services provided by their barangay. It also sought to gather suggestions from the community to improve these services. A descriptive qualitative research design was employed, involving 18 residents as participants. Data were collected through a structured interview guide, allowing in-depth responses. The findings revealed several challenges faced by the community, including ineffective waste disposal, poor emergency response, weak enforcement of peace and order, inadequate infrastructure maintenance, inconsistent health services, unequal educational support, and inefficient water supply management. In response, residents recommended that barangay officials may practice active listening, conduct proper deliberations before taking action, coordinate with the local government for financial support, and ensure fairness in service delivery. The study emphasized the need for responsive governance at the barangay level and emphasizes the importance of community involvement in addressing local issues as these can build more resilient and inclusive service systems that better meet the needs of their constituents.

Keywords: *Barangay services, Community problems, Local government issues, Public service delivery, Resident satisfaction*

Background

Barangay services are crucial as the primary government unit that delivers essential services directly to the community at the smallest level of government in the Philippines. Being the initial interface between the

government and the people, barangay services cover health programs, public safety programs, infrastructure and welfare services. These services form the cornerstone of ensuring community well-being of citizens, but good governance is usually changing based on variable

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factors such as resource availability, competence of local leadership, participation at the community level and convergence of services with the needs of the community. Knowing the barangay services' effectiveness and pinpointing areas of improvement are critical to building stronger local governance and improving people's quality of life in the community.

According to Malajos (2025), barangay services play an important role in helping communities grow and thrive. They provide for the everyday needs of residents, support the work of local governments, and promote fair and lasting progress by delivering essential public services effectively (Valdez, 2024). Additionally, barangay services are the key in community development by providing efficient delivery of key public services, including health programs, public safety, and disaster response (Udanga et al., 2023). Empirical evidence indicates that barangay governance is supported by robust administrative capacities, and these form the backbone of sustainable local governance (Basaluddin, 2021). Also, strategic direction-setting at the barangay level strengthens local government units and boosts their performance (Floranza, 2021). Feedback mechanisms have also been recognized as critical to aligning services with the needs of the community, ensuring that the needs of residents are addressed effectively (Kharal et al., 2022). Finally, barangay service alignment with community needs promotes not only short-term improvement but also long-term community development and welfare (Demetrio et al., 2024). Barangay services contribute significantly to the development of communities with an emphasis on effective public service delivery including health, safety, and disaster management. Successful governance is supported by effective administrative abilities and vision setting to facilitate strong local government capacities.

While several studies have examined barangay services in the Philippines, there is limited research focusing on the unique challenges faced by smaller and underrepresented communities such as Centro Napu, Tudela, Misamis Occidental. Existing literature points to persistent issues in local governance, particularly re-

lated to resource constraints and administrative inefficiencies (Dagohoy, 2021). Preliminary findings from an initial survey conducted by the researchers revealed recurring complaints about critical services such as emergency response, waste management, and the handling of public concerns. For instance, a resident publicly expressed dissatisfaction on social media after receiving no action on a community request. These accounts reveal a growing disconnect between public service delivery and community expectations. The absence of timely, effective responses to basic needs underscores an urgent need for comprehensive, localized research.

This research investigated the impact of service quality dimensions—namely reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, competence of leadership, citizen participation, and grievance handling—on the residents' experience and trust in barangay services in Centro Napu. To be specific, the research will attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What are the problems encountered by the residents on the services offered by the barangay?
2. What suggestions can the residents provide to help improve the delivery of barangay services in Centro Napu?

Literature Review

Community Problems

Barangay service delivery is hampered by community difficulties such as administrative hurdles, problems with digital infrastructure, and process automation (Deguma, 2024). Addressing these problems and enhancing government require active citizen participation and engagement (Ozaki, 2022; Camilleri, 2020). Residents' trust and happiness can be increased by a well-organized grievance system that reacts fairly and swiftly (Singh & Abhijeet, 2024; Valdez, 2021).

Best Practices in Public Service Delivery

Important best practices for enhancing barangay services include putting strong leadership, openness, and public participation into practice (Ragul, 2021; Atiku et al., 2023). Transformational and innovative leadership

improves governance results and aids in adjusting to social shifts (Duarte et al., 2021; Shek et al., 2023). Services can become more responsive, inclusive, and effective for the community by incorporating these principles (Ozaki, 2022; Singh & Abhijeet, 2024).

Methods

Research Design

A descriptive-qualitative research strategy, which is frequently utilized in the social sciences to methodically explain a phenomenon, was adopted in this study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Because it allowed for a thorough analysis of the issues inhabitants of Centro Napu, Tudela, Misamis Occidental, faced when trying to access barangay services, the descriptive technique was suitable for this study. By highlighting the shortcomings and difficulties in service delivery, it aimed to give a comprehensive picture of the current situation.

Research Participants

Residents of Centro Napu, Tudela, Misamis Occidental, as well as barangay officials and service providers, participated in this study. According to Ahmad et al. (2024), purposeful sampling was used to deliberately choose individuals who may offer insightful information about challenges faced when obtaining barangay services. Residents had to be at least eighteen, have resided in Centro Napu for a minimum of a year, and have faced difficulties in accessing barangay services in order to be selected. Currently serving in the barangay and having at least a year of experience in their positions were requirements for officials and service providers. At least ten locals and five authorities or service providers were among the 15–20 participants who were chosen. This sample size was consistent with qualitative research best practices, ensuring data saturation where recurring themes and patterns emerged (Guest et al., 2020).

Instrumentation and Data Gathering Process

A researcher-made interview guide questionnaire served as the research tool for data collection. Semi-structured interviews enable researchers to delve deeply into participants' experiences, viewpoints, and motives, yielding

insightful information that would be difficult to get using other techniques (Boşnak, 2022). The proponents personally delivered the validated questionnaire to each participant, allowing them to freely share their complaints and experiences as Centro Napu residents. The questionnaire asked about the problems that residents faced with the barangay services in Centro Napu. To ensure the questionnaire's validity, the proponents took a holistic approach by going through a detailed content validation process where the questionnaire was examined by the adviser, guidance counselor, school editor and research panelists, whose insights were invaluable in refining the questions to ensure clarity, relevance and alignment with the study objectives. After checking, necessary revisions were made to suit the required data, and the proponents incorporated the corrections before the actual interviewing of the participants, with the updated questionnaire validated once more by two experts, one guidance counselor and one English expert to evaluate both the content and the clarity of the language. Before the conduct of this study, the proponents asked permission from the research adviser to gather data, and when the request was granted, the questionnaires were administered to the participants with clear directions provided for understanding the given questions. The proponents personally interacted with the participants using the questionnaire as a data-gathering tool, and following the interview, the researchers conducted a qualitative analysis of the data where the answered instruments from the interview were transcribed, encoded, and translated.

Data Analysis

This study employed thematic analysis to identify, analyze, and report patterns within the data. As defined by Crosley (2021), thematic analysis involves examining recurring themes in a data set to uncover meaning guided by the research objectives. The researchers immersed themselves in the data by repeatedly reviewing the interview transcripts. The process began with familiarization through notetaking, recording, and collecting responses during interviews with participants. This was followed by initial coding, where recurring

phrases and significant insights were identified. These codes were then organized into themes that reflected the problems encountered by residents in relation to barangay services in Centro Napu.

Research Ethics

The confidentiality of the informants was not disclosed to anyone. Before the discussion began, a written informed consent form was presented to each informant. It was emphasized that the data collected would be used solely for academic purposes. The researchers assured the informants that all information gathered would remain strictly confidential and that their anonymity would be consistently maintained.

Result and Discussion

Problems Encountered by the Residents on the Services Offered by the Barangay

The findings revealed significant concerns in waste management, emergency response, peace and order, infrastructure, health services, educational support, and water management. These issues are not only detrimental to the residents' well-being but also reflect systemic gaps in governance and service delivery at the barangay level.

Theme 1: Ineffective Waste Disposal Practices

The residents cited inefficient waste disposal procedures as one of the most urgent problems. Unsuitable rubbish collection and handling were cited as serious problems by a significant portion of participants (11 out of 18). According to the comments, waste collection is irregular, and the issue is made worse by the absence of trash cans in public spaces. The study by Tanveer et al. (2022) highlights how waste management is crucial for both public health and environmental sustainability. However, in Centro Napu, the absence of an efficient waste management system contributes to the pollution of local waterways, a problem also emphasized by Raphela (2024).

Theme 2: Inadequate Emergency Response

The inability to respond to urgent demands was another important topic that surfaced.

Residents specifically pointed to the barangay's neglect of damaged infrastructure and insufficient drainage as the reason why flooding was consistently a problem. Although only five participants (5 out of 18) expressed concern about this, their comments suggest a larger governance problem: a failure to respond quickly enough to meet pressing community demands. The findings align with Sahani et al. (2024), who stress the importance of community engagement in effective crisis response. The lack of immediate action by local authorities weakens trust in the barangay governance.

Theme 3: Lack of Consistency in Maintaining Peace and Order

Another important concern brought up by the participants was the inconsistent enforcement of peace and order. Four out of the eighteen respondents voiced their displeasure with the barangay's dwindling patrols, especially in areas where theft and juvenile disruptions are common. Residents' safety and security are compromised when there are no proactive peace and order measures in place. As highlighted by Reyes (2023), community engagement and consistent law enforcement are essential for maintaining a stable environment. Without regular patrols, crime rates and social unrest increase, eroding the community's trust in local authorities.

Theme 4: Poor Infrastructure Management

Poor infrastructure management was another recurring issue in the findings. Many participants pointed out that damaged roads and inadequate drainage systems lead to frequent flooding, especially during the rainy season. Five participants (5 out of 18) specifically mentioned this issue. The failure to address infrastructure deficiencies reflects the broader challenge of resource allocation and planning, as discussed by Mazele and Amoah (2021). Without proper management and budgeting, infrastructure remains inadequate, contributing to environmental and public health risks.

Theme 5: Ineffective Health Management

The findings also revealed that residents were facing challenges with the barangay's health services. Issues such as insufficient

medication supply and the lack of proper care for senior citizens were highlighted by four participants (4 out of 18). As noted by Baliolaa et al. (2024), barangay health workers are vital to ensuring the accessibility of healthcare at the community level. However, in Centro Napu, ineffective management of health resources, coupled with insufficient funding and training, prevents residents from accessing timely and adequate care.

Theme 6: Uneven Distribution of Educational Support

The findings indicate a significant disparity in educational support, with some families feeling excluded from barangay programs aimed at supporting children's education. Four participants (4 out of 18) mentioned concerns about favoritism and unequal distribution of educational resources. This reflects broader issues in resource allocation at the barangay level, which can exacerbate inequalities, particularly among marginalized communities. Valdez (2022) also discusses the negative impact of unequal educational opportunities, which may contribute to long-term socio-economic disparities.

Theme 7: Inefficient Water Management

Inefficient water management was another challenge faced by the residents. Four participants (4 out of 18) mentioned irregular water supply, which directly impacts daily living conditions. As identified by Siddique (2022), water management in urban and rural areas is essential for public health and environmental sustainability. The inconsistent supply and weak water pressure in Centro Napu highlight governance shortcomings in managing this vital resource.

Suggestions to improve Barangay Services Delivery

In response to these issues, participants offered several suggestions to improve barangay services:

Theme 1: Active Listening and Immediate Action

Many residents emphasized the need for barangay officials to actively listen to their con-

cerns and take immediate action. Active listening has been shown to enhance community engagement and trust in local governance (Cutamora et al., 2025).

Theme 2: Regular Deliberations and Coordination

Residents recommended that the barangay meet frequently to talk about topics like infrastructure development, emergency response, and garbage management. To guarantee that solutions are thoughtful and meet the demands of the community, deliberative decision-making procedures are crucial (Visser & van Hulst, 2024).

Theme 3: Collaboration with Local Government Units (LGUs)

In order to obtain the money required for infrastructure projects, some participants emphasized the necessity of better collaboration with higher governmental levels. Asio (2021) points out that, particularly in environments with limited resources, efficient budget coordination is essential for tackling community issues.

Theme 4: Fairness in Service Delivery

Locals demanded that barangay services be distributed more fairly, especially in the areas of health and education. According to Davis (2021), residents' trust and contentment can be increased by ensuring justice in public service.

Conclusion

This study examined the problems encountered by the residents of Barangay Centro Napu, Tudela, Misamis Occidental in accessing essential barangay services and identified community-suggested solutions to improve local service delivery. Findings revealed key challenges in waste management, emergency response, peace and order, infrastructure development, health services, educational support, and water management. These issues reflect not only service delivery gaps but also broader deficiencies in administrative efficiency, resource utilization, and community engagement. The study emphasized that these service deliv-

ery failures hinder the well-being and development of the community and erode public trust in local governance.

The implication of this study presents the urgent need for barangay officials to adopt a more responsive, participatory, and strategic approach to governance. Strengthening feedback mechanisms, prioritizing transparency, and engaging residents in planning and decision-making are critical for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of barangay services. Moreover, fostering collaboration with Local Government Units (LGUs) for budgetary and technical support can bridge resource gaps and enhance implementation. The study affirms that community-based recommendations—such as active listening, regular assemblies, and fairness in service distribution—are crucial steps toward inclusive and resilient local governance.

Given the limited focus on smaller and underrepresented communities like Centro Napu in existing literature, this research provides valuable insights into grassroots-level challenges and contributes to the growing discourse on improving barangay governance in the Philippines. Future research should consider comparative studies across multiple barangays to explore common issues and replicate best practices in local service delivery.

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