

Gavel to Ground: Examining the Effectiveness and Efficacy of Project Karunungan in Enhancing Local Governance and its Future Direction

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ABSTRACT

In the context of local governance, careful implementation of parliamentary procedures during meetings is of great concern. In 2019, Project Karunungan, a training workshop program, was born from cooperation between the Political Science Department of Mindanao State University and the Local Government Unit of General Santos City, Philippines. The initiative's primary goal is to educate barangay officials about Robert's Rules of Order principles. This paper is qualitative and quantitative research, drawing arguments from interviews and surveys. The correct parliamentary process significantly improves local governance by providing a formal framework for decision-making and guaranteeing fairness, openness, and accountability. This paper advances the significance of Project Karunungan to new heights as a continuous program to produce better leaders.

INTRODUCTION

Article VI, Section 3 of the Philippine Constitution provides that "each house may determine the rules of its proceeding." Parliamentary procedure is commonly followed in legislative bodies and other deliberative assemblies to ensure orderly and efficient business conduct. With the parliamentary procedure, the legislative bodies can carry out their duties of representation, oversight, and legislation, which depend on how successfully they carry out their duties. The idea of Parliamentary Procedure has to be strengthened because of how quickly the nation and the rest of the globe are developing (Yin 2009). Suppose public gatherings and conferences are to serve as the foundation for accountable governance. In that case, they must adhere to established rules regarding discussing and resolving matters of public interest. People's will is sovereign, as democracy has said for thousands of years. In many developing and developed countries, parliaments must be more robust, effective, and marginalized (Tsekpo & Hudson 2009).

There are 42,029 barangays in the Philippines. A barangay, which is the grassroots government division of cities and municipalities, is the lowest political unit in the Philippines. Within the nation's political structure, it is seen as an essential component. Roughly thirty years ago, the Local Government Code of 1991 was approved. One is that it decentralized authority from the federal government to local governments and provided services to them. The purpose of the law is to establish self-sufficient communities to sustain national development (FAOLEX 1991). The Local Government Code of 1991, also known as Republic Act No. 7160, establishes the parameters and powers of the administrations at the provincial, city, municipality, and barangay levels. Furthermore, in the Local Government Code of the Philippines, a barangay is composed of a Barangay Captain (Punong Barangay), who holds the executive power and is the presiding officer in every session. Also, a Barangay Council (Sangguniang Barangay) has legislative power within the barangay and mainly proposes projects, plans, and barangay laws. Then, the SK Chairman (Sangguniang Kabataan) represents the voice of the youth constituents of the barangay (Pagsanghan, 1993). The barangay is the fundamental unit of government for which policies, strategies, services, initiatives, and events are planned and carried out within the community (Formoso, 2017).

In addition, local government in the Philippines was granted considerable discretion to make essential choices about managing their local communities due to these transferred powers and authority. A key factor in the empowerment of the nation's local government units is barangay governance. This is related to the leader's responsibility, equity, and openness when carrying out his responsibilities and serving as a community servant (Boysillo, 2016). For the development of the barangay, barangay officials conduct two monthly sessions. In every session, barangay officials present plans for the development of the barangay and present solutions to the problems existing within the barangay (Masagca, Masagca, & Chunxiang, 2009). To ensure a fair, democratic, and productive meeting, it is necessary to follow the rules and procedures. In a democratic state like the Philippines, meetings and sessions are governed by

Parliamentary Procedure (Erikson 2012). Parliamentary Procedure is projected to be the core of the legislative process. In a deliberative assembly, the generally recognized guidelines, cases, and customs used to run deliberative assemblies are often referred to as 'the rules of order'. It offers fundamental tools needed for efficient group action. There are legislative laws that contribute to the transparent, balanced, and effective creation of public policy. How well these norms are understood and implemented at a political or strategic level can determine whether a piece of legislation passes or is lost (Erickson, 2012). The book Robert's Rules of Order 11th edition by Robert et al. (2011) encapsulates the origin of parliamentary procedure in the English Parliament for conducting business. It was established by a continuous sequence of rulings and precedents, much as how the common law grew. These laws and practices, which were introduced to America with the colonization of the New World, served as the foundation for developing legislative body practice in the country. The general parliamentary law, also known as common parliamentary law, was inspired by the early American legislative process and set in a manner similar to it. It is now customized to meet the demands of organizations and assemblies with a wide range of goals and circumstances. It offers a thorough structure for running meetings, putting out motions, casting votes, and managing different issues that might arise—a set of guidelines and regulations for organizing and efficiently holding meetings and making decisions. A collection of core concepts, such as majority rule, minority rights protection, and the freedom to participate in discussion and decision-making, form the basis of parliamentary procedure (Palonen, 2016).

On one hand, in a democratic system, a session needs to follow parliamentary procedure to ensure that the session is in an orderly manner with respect and impartiality involved while taking majority rule yet protecting minority rights. However, with a third of barangay officials finishing secondary education, thirteen percent graduated from elementary school. Only a few barangay officials had bachelor's degrees (Inquirer, 2023). With a multi-party that needs more education and understanding of correctly applying parliamentary procedures, a monopolistic decision will be crafted and somehow will fail (Pindani, 1999). The problem sometimes is that an organization being indifferent and allowing a select few members to make all the decisions are two of the biggest challenges to a democratic organization. This fosters authoritarianism and causes division. Another danger is when a tiny group works covertly behind the scenes to advance its agenda or aims and then forces it through without consulting the rest of the membership through deliberation or the inquiry process. Such behavior breeds suspicion and animosity between members of the parliament (Robert, 2001). Everyone has to be aware of the parliamentary process. In addition to being often used in all kinds of meetings, it promotes teamwork, organization, self-control, rapid thinking, and good citizenship. The unnecessary use of parliamentary procedure may impede rather than advance legislative processes (Connors, 2004).

Moreover, the best way to solve the challenges barangay officials face is to conduct training. In the Philippines, the Department of the Interior and Local

Government conducts training for newly elected officials called BNEO (Barangay New Elected Officials), which encapsulates training on the work of a barangay official (Petinglay, 2018). Yet, barangay officials still need help to follow the procedure under parliamentary procedure, especially under the Roberts Rules. To educate the barangay officials of General Santos City, the MSU-GSC Political Science Department proposed an initiative program, Project Karunungan, to the Local Government Unit for project collaboration. Project Karunungan is a training workshop on Parliamentary Procedure under Robert's Rules to hone barangay officials' knowledge and skills in the barangays in General Santos City. Under the Memorandum of Understanding signed between former City Mayor Hon. Ronnel C. Rivera and MSU-GSC Chancellor Dr. Anshari P. Ali, Project Karunungan is implemented. Although there are twenty-six (26) barangays in General Santos City, only three (3) barangays successfully completed the course: Barangay Mabuhay, Barangay Katangawan, and Barangay Dadiangas North.

There are three arguments presented in this paper. First, this paper argues that Project Karunungan effectively hones the knowledge and skills of Barangay Officials and causes efficient deliberation in every session. Second, Project Karunungan is a crucial program that must be conducted continuously in every barangay of General Santos City, especially after the election. Lastly, correct parliamentary process significantly improves local governance by providing a formal framework for decision-making and guaranteeing fairness, openness, and accountability in local government procedures.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Democratic Theory and Education

Under the principle of Dewey's democratic theory and education, he emphasized relearning and reevaluating things. Dewey's theory argues for the continuous study of things that align with the legislative process's dynamic character. Regularly reviewing laws and regulations is necessary for effective governance (Cha, 2000). Moreover, aside from relearning, reevaluation after teaching or training is critical to ascertain that there is an insight within the participants as the training ends (Dewey 1916). Suppose we apply the principles under John Dewey's theory to Project Karunungan. In that case, teaching the barangay officials about the procedures and rules under the Parliamentary Procedure of Roberts Rules is a prerequisite for improving good local governance and legislation. It is critical to reevaluate and ensure that legislative processes support fair representation, diversity, and democratic principles.

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative, quantitative, and descriptive research design was used in the study. To thoroughly understand a research issue, a qualitative-quantitative descriptive research design integrates components of both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. The validity and dependability of the research findings are increased by the integration of both forms of data, which enables a thorough description of a phenomenon. This allows a more comprehensive description of the effectiveness and efficiency of Project Karunungan provided by the MSU-GSC Political Science Department in the

knowledge, skill, and deliberation of barangay officials in Barangay Mabuhay, Katangawan, and Dadisngas North of General Santos City. This study's participants all completed the three-day program. To assess whether or not the provided training is effective, the researcher employs a survey through a questionnaire that the 20 barangay officials answered. The survey questionnaire has been split into three parts for ease of understanding and convenience. Part one contains questions targeted to assess participants' knowledge of parliamentary procedure. Part two questions participants' skills in utilizing parliamentary procedure during deliberative assembly. Part three will have questions in assessing the efficiency of the barangay assembly's deliberation after Project Karunungan's conduct. The participants of the conducted training program will then answer it.

Furthermore, the researcher also utilized Key Informant Interviews as a qualitative tool. In the Key Informant Interview, the researcher selected only two barangay officials to answer the guide questions. In assessing the data gathered through the questionnaire, the researcher will apply weighted mean in interpreting the data, and thematic analysis will be used in analyzing the participants' answers to the interview. Based on the gathered data, the researcher will conclude on the effectiveness and efficiency of parliamentary training. Also, a recommendation on what aspect/s of Project Karunungan needs revision or improvement will be given.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Effectiveness of Project Karunungan in Honing the Knowledge of the Barangay Officials

Understanding and becoming conversant with the technical rules of Parliamentary Procedures, especially Robert's Rules, takes a lot of effort. This is incredibly off-putting to those with less formal education and newly active (Parker 2019). The Local Government Code of the Philippines doesn't require barangay officials to finish college or even secondary school. The only requirement needed to be a barangay official is to read and write and live in the barangay vicinity. The lower the educational attainment, the more likely they will perform less poorly (Arris and Timmis 1989, as cited in Osinao 2014). One of the concerns of the barangay officials in the three barangays during the interview is that all barangay officials have different educational attainments and capabilities to grasp the lesson that Project Karunungan offers. Even after a thorough discussion with Dr. Campado, some barangay officials need further learning about the proper procedure under Project Karunungan. According to Informant No. 3 stated:

In all honesty, we do have barangay councilors that still don't know and don't practice parliamentary procedure. Their knowledge is lesser compared to the other participants of Project Karunungan.

There might be some lapses, yet all participants answered that Project Karunungan is effective in honing the knowledge of the barangay officials who participated in the Program. When put into a percentage, more than 50-80% of

the participants are able to understand the proceeding under Parliamentary Procedure, specifically Robert Rules. In the statement of Informant No. 3

Out of all participants 60- 80% did learn from Project Karunungan. It is a big help as give us all considerable wisdom on how proceedings done properly. For me they did learn a lot.

Survey questionnaires are also utilized to evaluating the effectiveness of Project Karunungan in honing the knowledge of the barangay officials who participated in the program. To ensure that every participant can be included in the study.

Table 1. Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Project Karunungan in Knowledge

Barangays	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Dadiangas North	4.54	Very Effective
Mabuhay	4.48	Effective
Katangawan	4.51	Very Effective
Overall Mean	4.51	Very Effective

The evaluation presented in Table 1 demonstrates the program's fruitfulness by improving barangay officials' knowledge of parliamentary procedure. From the answers of 20 barangay officials with the ten questions under part I of the survey questionnaire coming from Dadiangas North, Mabuhay, and Katangawan, the Program is deemed very effective with a weighted mean of 4.51. The practical and very effective interpretation of the findings highlight how well the intervention changed knowledge in each of the assessed barangays. According to this thorough evaluation, Project Karunungan has improved knowledge in the barangays to which it has touched and contributed significantly.

Using the different methods in evaluating the success of Project Karunungan in imparting knowledge under parliamentary procedure bears the same results. With the interviewee rating of 50-80% justifying that the project is effective, and in a survey that has a 4.51 total weighted mean with three barangays, it may not be all, but most did have a high understanding of Parliamentary Procedure under Robert's Rules due to the program. It was also worth noting that they did applied the lessons they attain in every session. Advising and correcting their colleagues when making mistakes and acquiring knowledge not by experience but by the seminar conducted. Usually, participants of Parliamentary Procedural Training, especially the old, reject new and proper ways of conducting sessions as, for them, parliamentary procedure can be learned with years within the government through exposure during deliberative assembly (Steinak 2015). Nevertheless, Project Karunungan shows otherwise, that everyone is willing to learn as long as they crave more learning and there is an institution willing to couch them.

Effectiveness of Project Karunungan in Honing the Skills of Barangay Official

Project Karunungan as a Parliamentary Procedure Training is a deliberate action intended to improve the factors influencing how well each person

performs at work (Chiaburu and Teklab 2005). What the barangay learned in Project Karunungan are considered to be soft skills. A skill people acquire via personal development programs can be applied in their professional and personal lives (Arat 2014). In the study conducted in the ten barangays of Alcantara Romblon, Philippines, it indicates that their skills are only in average level compared to barangay officials' above-average level of knowledge (Libo-on 2020). As skill is the capacity to apply information to specific situations. Practice and a mix of sensory input and output are used to build result. Also, continuous practice is required to master a skill (Baulet 2015).

Even though skills are challenging to master, the interviewee of the study, when asked if the training program is effective in terms of honing skills, all labeled it as effective. In addition, when asked about the estimated percentage of barangay officials who are skilled in parliamentary procedure after the conduct of Project Karunungan, it ranges from 60%-85%. It is surprising at some point since it got higher evaluation compared to their attained knowledge. However, Informant No. 6 says that although the project effectively improves the skills of barangay officials to be genuinely skilled in parliamentary procedure, it is hard in itself.

If you ask how skilled the ones who participate the Project Karunungan in Parliamentary Procedure then it is around 60%. It can't be fully a 100% as it is difficult, even the Congress still commits mistakes during sessions.

Table 2. Evaluation on the Effectiveness of Project Karunungan in Skills

Barangay	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Dadiangas North	4.76	Very Effective
Mabuhay	4.50	Very Effective
Katangawan	4.75	Very Effective
Overall Mean	4.57	Very Effective

Table 2 presents a comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of Project Karunungan in enhancing skills across different barangays. The results are highly positive, indicating a significant impact on skills development. In Dadiangas North, the project received an impressive Weighted Mean of 4.76, categorizing it as "Very Effective." Mabuhay and Katangawan also demonstrated substantial effectiveness with Weighted Means of 4.50 and 4.75, respectively, both falling into the "Very Effective" range. The overall Total Mean of 4.57 reinforces the project's success, marking it as "Very Effective" on average across all barangays. This suggests that Project Karunungan has been highly successful in fostering skill development in the communities it serves, showcasing its effectiveness and potential for positive impact on a broader scale. Libo-on and Luzon put great emphasis that barangay officials are more knowledgeable rather

than skillful in dealing with parliamentary procedure but the results of both interview and survey shows that the barangay officials of Mabuhay, Katangawan, and Dadiangas North are more skillful in the procedures under Parliamentary Procedure than knowledgeable. The development of their skills after the parliamentary procedure is explained by Informant 1

It is a common knowledge that each barangay follow different rules and procedures that they adopt from the previous officials. Most of these procedures are mold through experience and didn't really conform from the proper Parliamentary Procedure. Due to Project Karunungan, we did practice the proper way. Then, when we do have gatherings with other barangay, it enhances further. Our skills in Parliamentary Procedure enhance and develop little by little.

Having both data from interview and survey questionnaire indicating that Project Karunungan is indeed effective in improving the skills of barangay officials with participants estimating that 60-85% are skilled enough with the proper usage of the procedure under parliamentary procedure. Along with survey questionnaire having an overall weighted mean of 4.57 indicating that the program is "Very Effective".

Efficient Deliberation after Project Karunungan

Legislative motions are proposed, amended, approved, and defeated using parliamentary procedure. Although parliamentary procedure is unnecessary, it can improve the efficiency of council sessions (Jones 1971). Parliamentary procedure is a quick, efficient, organized and democratic way to conduct business at a meeting (Patanode 1989). Parliamentary procedure is essential to promoting efficiency in deliberation and session because it offers a defined framework for holding meetings and making decisions. Creating a well-defined agenda, facilitating a smooth flow of conversation, and acknowledging speakers guarantee that attendees stay on task and that communication is systematic and courteous. The strategic use of committees and imposing time limitations on agenda items both aid in time management. By upholding accountability and openness, the emphasis on precise record-keeping—achieved through the compilation of minutes—serves as a useful resource for participants and enhances the session's overall efficacy (Macy 1892).

What transcribe to the participants during Project Karunungan is that the skills and knowledge they gained from the project served as a tool to make their meeting/session effective and efficient. There are three factors that contribute to session and deliberation to shorten: Following the approved agenda, Limiting the discussion to the important matter, and making sure that the meeting ends within the "Fix the Time at Which to Adjourn". The agenda is an essential part of a meeting. An agenda ensures that a meeting stays on course and that all participants know what has happened and what will happen next. A meeting may easily devolve into chaos without an agenda, and crucial business could not be done (Prykucki 2014). In parliamentary procedure, the agenda serves as a roadmap in sessions by outlining the business sequence. By allowing for the

effective allotment of time to each agenda item, the agenda helps to avoid needless delays and guarantees that all pertinent issues are covered within the allotted time. Informant 1 supported this claim.

It was taught under Project Karunungan that when certain matters are out of the topic, the presiding officer do have the authority to stop it. The chair possess the power to lead the member of the session to focus on the important matters in the discussion regarding the agenda. Also, in the Project Karunugan if it is not in stipulated in the agenda then it cannot be discussed. For an efficient session to be possible, it is vital to stick to the approved agenda and only talk about important topics or great concerns in the barangay. When asked if Project Karunungan ever emphasized during their lesson that unnecessary things should not be included, Informant 4 stated:

Yes, unnecessary things should not be talked during session. The things that should be said are only the important ones.

The third factor that contributed to the efficient effect of Project Karunungan on the session and deliberation is that they now know how to follow the time set in every motion of Fix the Time at Which to Adjourn. Barangay officials only let a free-flow discussion, and they usually take a couple of hours to finish their session before the conduct of Project Karunungan as they only practice what their predecessors practice. Learning how to follow the set timetable that the people agree to lessen the time sessions usually held. Some barangays stated that sessions became shortened by 30 minutes up to 1 hour. In agreement with the statement of Informant 3

The time shorten for about 1 hour as to before that we used to reach by 12 p.m. We usually start by 9 a.m. and end at 12 p.ml. However, when Project Karunungan was there, we start by 9 a.m. and end at 11 a.m., sometimes we can even be done by 10 a.m.

Table 3. Evaluation on the Efficacy of Project Krunuangan

Barangay	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Dadiangas North	4.78	Very Efficient
Mabuhay	4.34	Efficient
Katangawan	4.78	Very Efficient
Overall Mean	4.62	Very Efficient

The assessment of Project Krunuangan's efficacy in the three barangays demonstrates a consistently high-efficiency level. Dadiangas North and Katangawan, with a weighted mean of 4.78, are classified as "Very Efficient," indicating that the time taken for discussion, deliberation, voting, and the overall session has significantly shortened. The barangay of Mabuhay, with a slightly lower weighted mean of 4.34, is also deemed "Efficient," showcasing a commendable level of success, albeit marginally below the top-performing

barangays. The overall mean for the project, calculated across all barangays at 4.62, categorizes it as "Very Efficient." This suggests that Project Krunungan has been successful and demonstrated a streamlined and resource-effective approach across the evaluated communities. The consistently high-efficiency ratings imply that the project has been optimally designed and executed, resulting in significant positive impacts on finishing sessions in a much shorter time than before.

The survey and interview findings show a remarkable outcome that justifies that Project Karunungan by the Department of Political Science of Mindanao State University caused sessions, discussions, debates, voting, and deliberation to take less time. In the survey, the overall mean of Barangay Dadiangas North, Mabuhay, and Katangawan is at 4.62, which is categorized as "Very Efficient". Furthermore, the interview reveals that the time taken to end the session differs from 30 minutes to one hour compared to before. It is because Project Karunungan focus on emphasizing to follow the agreed agenda, discuss only the critical issues concerning the barangay, and finish the session at the approved time in the motion "fix the time at which to adjourn".

Capability of the Presiding Officer

A key factor in the empowerment of the nation's local government units is barangay governance. This is related to the leader's responsibility, equity, and openness in carrying out his responsibilities and serving as a public servant (Boysillo 2017). The Barangay Captain (Punong Barangay) in a session or meeting must act as a presiding officer; however, in his absence, a member of the Barangay Council (Sangguniang Barangay) acting in Barangay Captain's place or by any other assembly member chosen during the meeting under the Local Government Code of 1991. Yet, there are instances wherein the capabilities of barangay leaders are in question. One of the issues that hinder an effective and efficient flow of the session is not only the lack of educational attainment but also the capability of the presiding officer to control the overall aspect of the session. Their incapability to preside affects their ability to govern as they need to process legislatures correctly (Muylle 2003).

When interviewing two of the respondents from Barangay Dadiangas North, they both stated that the present Barangay Captain of their barangay is incapable of leading and presiding over the session. The Reason behind this is that he needed to learn how to preside under Parliamentary Procedure, and he didn't put any effort into understanding and improving as he failed to join the project every time. This action put the session in a state of chaos and pushed the barangay members to be forced to cross the line sometimes. For a fruitful legislative process, the barangay resorts to letting one of their barangay council members fill the role of the presiding officer. In the words of Informant No. 5

Here in our barangay, the one who presides is me, even though I am not the Barangay Captain because the barangay captain didn't know how to do so. When Project Karunungan is there, my knowledge of how to run a session increases.

The capability of the presiding officer is tested in how they facilitate discussion, ensuring no monopoly of decision, neutrality, recognizing and accepting everyone's opinion among the study informants, the one that best explains how the presiding officer embodies and practices these elements is Informants 2 and 3. When asked how the presiding officer can ensure that there is no monopoly of decision and that there is no bias happening, Informant 3 stated that

As the presiding officer I do ensure that everyone will have the chance to speak. I don't let them say just yes or no. They talk one by one, the reason behind their votes and it is recorded in the minutes.

Moreover, acknowledging and recognizing every member's opinion is essential as it supports the values of inclusion and democratic decision-making. Having an open debate and hearing both sides would promote a comprehensive understanding of the issues of the barangay. It could also strengthen the trust between officials and be a tool to lessen any personal attacks. Informant 2 stated:

All members that is present during sessions can voice their sentiments. The session should be open for all, to ensure that it is not only a single person voicing out his/her opinion. If there is someone who wants to speak, acknowledge him/her. We don't know maybe his/her idea is brilliant. So we should gather all suggestions and choose the better option.

All of these are in the core purpose of parliamentary procedure and are inclined with the principle under the democratic theory of John Dewey. Dewey argues that democracy is not merely a system of governance but also a moral and ethical ideal founded on freedom, equality, and group decision-making (Caspary, 2000). He held that democracy ought to be an open, inclusive process where people actively participate in public affairs, contribute to society's welfare, and continually learn from and develop via shared experiences (Jackson 2015). The emphasis on the inclusion of diverse perspectives in decision-making processes under Dewey's democratic theory aligns with Robert's Rules of Order in giving equal opportunity and encouraging all members of the parliament to speak to the motions, participate in discussions and debate, and rely on opinions that is vital in the motion propose (Blackburn 2017). Also, in the democratic theory of Dewey, he emphasizes a bottom-up approach in a community in line with the principle of grassroots governance, which is also a bottom-up approach to decision-making and governance that emphasizes the active participation and involvement of local communities in forming policies, programs, and initiatives that affect communities lives (Bussel et al., 2020).

Smooth and Organize Session

Parliamentary procedure's purpose is not to impose undue restrictions on a meeting or to limit the expression of viewpoints. It aims to assist the meeting's smooth operation and foster member harmony and collaboration (Nguyen 2012). Rules under parliamentary procedure are significantly more straightforward than any other rules in sports, yet just as learning the rules of a

game takes time and effort. So, too, do in parliamentary procedure. Learning the guidelines under parliamentary procedure is meant to uphold decorum, determine the majority's will, protect the rights of the minority, and make it easier for an assembly to conduct its work in an orderly manner (Jones 1982). Meetings that include a group trying to conclude can get tense and disorganized. Sometimes, several people are trying to talk simultaneously, and some are disinterested in the things being discussed and are seated at the rear of the room. Participants in disorganized meetings argue, make poor judgments, and leave the meeting feeling bewildered and irritated. A rudimentary knowledge of parliamentary procedure facilitates well-run sessions and productive decision-making for everybody involved (Walker et al. 2018). Among the basic rules in the parliamentary procedure that results in a smooth and organized session is the ability of the barangay officials to listen attentively so that they can interject a useful opinion that is connected to the topic and avoid scenarios wherein barangay officials would raise opinion at the same time.¹² Another, before obtaining the floor, the member should ensure that the chair recognizes him/her. Through the words of Informant 4

The barangay official should listen, not because he/she is not recognized; he/she can speak randomly.

Promoting attentive listening and courtesy within the bounds of parliamentary procedure is essential to fostering a seamless and well-run session. To maintain order and provide everyone an equal chance to speak, it is recommended that attendees raise their hands and wait politely for the presiding officer to acknowledge them and obtain the floor. They stress that crossing the lines between barangay officials is not permitted. Upholding a respectful culture creates a productive atmosphere where legislative decision-making, not people, is the main emphasis (Litwiller 2016). In line with this, Informant 5 said that

In session, I make sure that there are no personal attacks. Because we are political and we do have ethics that means we should observe courtesy. Let us respect each other because personal attacks will happen if we will just be yelling each other. It is unpleasant to hear that the barangay is constantly fighting.

Project Karunungan serves as a device for the three barangays of General Santos City that finished and participated in the project to apply the things they learned for the lesson to have a smooth and organized session or meeting. It is an inevitable fact that Henry Robert, the man behind Roberts Rule, created a systematic and organized way to conduct a session that is also anchored with the ideas of democratic decision-making. Compared to before, they typically described the session as a scenario within a wet market; after the project, they created a more systematic way of conducting their sessions. When asked if they agree about relearning and reevaluation of the project, Informant No.3 answered.

Yes, reevaluation and relearning are necessary because we do practice that always. There are things we need to remember, deviate, and do deviate. However, if we were oriented again, we would remember that

we did commit mistake again, or we can learn again up until we perfect it.

Relearning and reevaluation are not the only things the barangay officials suggested for the success of Project Karunungan. Most barangay officials raise concern that the time allotted by Mindanao State University Political Science Department needs to be increased for them to understand the procedure under Parliamentary Procedure thoroughly. Though DILG included parliamentary procedural training under BNEO (Barangay New Elective Official), Project Karunungan is still different. Informant No.3 explicitly explains why the three-day time isn't sufficient and how many days it must be.

Maybe about one week, but not like 8 hours a day. We will going to have information overload if so. Around 5-6 hours in a day. For us to be refreshed also.

Additionally, the informants share a different proposal of how the discussants can change their teaching method so that all participants will be inclined to listen attentively and comprehend the lesson covered. The majority of the informants suggested that rather than pure lessons, they prefer that they be taught in an actual setting. They will perform their usual session, and the facilitators or discussants will correct them and explain their mistakes in action rather than with pure words only. Informant No. 6 suggested that rather than doing the practicum on the third day, why not have it after every lesson? He stated that

I suggest there is an actual workshop on the day rather than doing it on the third day. How about doing it daily in the last hour? Topic of the day then actual in the last hour, instead of wholesaling it in the third day because the lessons in the first and second day will be easily forgotten.

In relation to the barangay's issue, which is the need for the educational attainment of other barangay officials, it hinders their ability to be leaders and create effective legislation for the barangay. They needed to fill in the knowledge and skills mostly advertised to continue providing parliamentary procedural training to every barangay. Since others needed help in the lesson, the participants suggested using vernacular language while teaching and explaining things, avoiding fast-paced methods while teaching, and joking between the lessons. These proposed methods ensure that everyone can learn just like everybody else.

Among the barangay officials' recommendations, creating a partnership with DILG, a government institution, will significantly alter and shape the project's future direction. Interviewee No. 3 wants Project Karunungan to be included in the DILG's Barangay Newly Elected Officials (BNEO) program. While DILG will cover in teaching the overall role and responsibility of a barangay official, Project Karunungan will be the one that will cover and educate about Robert's Rules of Parliamentary Procedure. It will also benefit the project

as they can now teach all of the newly elected barangay officials of General Santos City. They could also guarantee that all or most will attend, not just a few barangay officials. Project Karunungan can be improve by:

1. Relearning and Reevaluation of the program after it is conducted.
2. Continues teaching for an average of one week for 5-6 hours a day.
3. Rather than doing pure lessons within the first and second day of the program and actual performance in the third day, it is better to have lessons in the early hours and practical in the last hour.
4. To ensure that everyone can be equally proficient the discussants must use vernacular language, avoid fast-paced teaching, and interject jokes to elude from boredom.

Partnership with DILG, while the DILG's Barangay Newly Elected Officials (BNEO) program cover the role and responsibilities of a barangay official, Project Karunungan will educate about Robert's Rules of Parliamentary Procedure. The study findings are supported by one study conducted in the 5th District of Camarines Sur, which has provided insights into the correlation between local leaders' awareness of parliamentary procedures and their adoption rates. It was found that those leaders who had a high level of familiarity with parliamentary procedures also demonstrated a higher adoption rate. On the other hand, those leaders who had a low level of awareness of parliamentary procedures showed lower adoption rates (Luzon, 2020). Hence, there is a crucial need for Project Karunungan, which provides comprehensive training to local leaders in basic Robert's Rules of Order of Proceedings. This training will enable local leaders to make faster and smoother deliberations, ultimately leading to the development of better leaders. The significance of such training cannot be overstated, as it ensures that local leaders are fully equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to lead their communities effectively. and service delivery.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The best procedure so far developed for enabling assemblies of any size to reach the public will, on the most significant number of problems of diverse complexity in the shortest period of time, is the application of parliamentary legislation (Evans 2000). However, many organizations struggle to handle their business properly and quickly. The typical outcome, then, is the need for more understanding and expertise about conducting sessions as well as the poor and inefficient legislative processes. Project Karunungan was launched to provide enlightenment and demonstrations on how to conduct proper business. The project was conducted from 2019 to 2020. Do the participants still think the project is effective and efficient and should be continued?

Based on the preceding analyses, Project Karunungan successfully honed the knowledge and skills of barangay officials in Dadiangas North, Mabuhay, and Katangawan, all of whom participated in the conduct of Project Karunungan. Results also show in the survey and interview that there was efficient

deliberation after the project was conducted. Even though many years have passed, most lessons during Project Karunungan are still intact in their minds. In this study, two barangay officials from each barangay became the participants. When asked if the project is genuinely effective in improving their skills and knowledge, all of them guarantee it is indeed effective. With a rating of 50-80%, they have a high understanding of the procedures of Parliamentary Procedure, and 60-85% are genuinely skilled when applying it during barangay meetings. Meanwhile, the result of the survey questionnaire, which was taken by twenty barangay officials who participated in Project Karunungan, presents that both the overall mean of knowledge and skills were "Very Effective," with an overall mean of 4.51 and 4.57, respectively. If the results of the two methods are to be compared, it shows that Project Karunungan is truly successful. Similarly, participants of the study confirmed that the session became more efficient as a result of applying the knowledge and skills barangay officials acquired during the training, with the time ending an hour or thirty minutes less compared to before and an overall mean of 4.62. Project Kaunungan put great emphasis on following the approved agenda, discussing essential matters concerning the barangay, and limiting the session based on the motion "Fix Time at Which to Adjourn".

The Barangay Captain (Punong Barangay) has the highest authority in the barangay and is responsible for being the presiding officer and taking complete control over the session. The inability to understand and execute the procedure and rules under parliamentary procedure creates a failure to create plans and laws essential for the development of the barangay. Project Karunungan enables even the barangay council members to perform the role of a presiding officer, just like in the case of Barangay Dadiangas North. Data shows the capability of the presiding officer to facilitate discussion, ensure no monopoly of decision, stay neutral, and recognize and acknowledge everyone's opinion. These factors are in line with the idea of John Dewey's democratic theory, wherein all members of the assembly must participate in debate and discussion and speak for the motion for a healthy practice of a democratic decision-making process.

When a presiding officer masters the rules of parliamentary procedure, and members are knowledgeable and skilled, it will eventually make for a smooth and organized session. A meeting veering from its old image is comparable to how chaotic the wet market is. As barangay officials learn through Project Karunungan, wait before speaking their opinion and avoiding any personal attacks as much as possible. Member became mindful and courteous even after the project.

Project Karunungan should continue to educate and train other barangays in General Santos City about the rules and procedures of Robert's Rules of Parliamentary Procedure. It is by the recommendation and suggestions of the participants on how to improve the project. The reason for having different educational attainment and capabilities to digest lessons is that participants prefer if they will be taught in vernacular and slow-paced style. An actual set-up lecture rather than a pure explanation through words is best since it is more

interactive and engaging. Facilitators of the project must allot seven days as more than three days are needed for barangay officials to hone their knowledge and skills to perfection.

Among the suggestions presented by the participants, cooperation in training the newly elected barangay officials with DILG in its Program (BNEO) is an aspect that will transform the project. If this is implemented, then it will serve as an avenue for Mindanao State University's Political Science Department to rise from the status quo. Evaluating the extension program of the Political Science Department is conducted not only to know its effectiveness and efficiency but also to discover whether or not the project is worth putting effort and time into. As the general findings show that the project is successful, facilitators and discussants behind the project should continue educating barangay officials about Robert's Rules of Parliamentary Procedure for a fruitful legislative process in local governance.

FURTHER STUDY

The proposed further study includes the other barangays of General Santos City to compare and contrast the effectiveness of Project Karunungan applying the Roberts Rule of Parliamentary Procedure in their session meetings. Moreover, the research can be expanded across Region XII. By advancing this research, a more comprehensive and deeper understanding of the critical importance of the project will be attained.

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