

Problems on the Implementation of Participatory Governance

Roselyn G. Malong, M.Ed.

Surigao del Sur State University, Tandag City Surigao del Sur, Philippines.

Email: roselynmalong2016@gmail.com

Abstract

This study assessed the problems on the implementation of Participatory Governance. To this end, the study employed a qualitative research design using interviews and focused group discussion to the key informants. The study revealed that implementation of the program has dealt with difficulties to overcome their fear to participate in the government, hence moving away from the rhetorical realm into practices surpassing few fundamental challenges for governments when they seek to involve actively citizens in decision making. On the other hand, community people are hesitant to participate in any Barangay activity due to bad experiences from the past where programs and projects promised by politicians were not realized or sustained. Some of the sectors are not organized and is not accredited by the Barangay Development Council. The Government finds it hard to organize them to participate in the government despite the mandate stated in the local government Code of 1991 where sectoral representation in the council should be recognized. And further, citizen's participation is not visible especially during General Assembly and other community-related meetings that resulted to Non- regular conduct of General Assembly and Purok meetings in the area. Programs and plans were being done by the government officials itself and no community consultation. The Barangay does not have a Five Year Development Plan as mandated by the constitution due to lack of people's participation. The five- Year Plan is the basis of the Barangay Annual Planning that only the Barangay Officials is doing.

Keywords: Participatory Governance, programs, projects and effects

I. INTRODUCTION

Participatory governance is crucial for contending with complex problems of managing for multiple values and outcomes to achieve a desired sustainable development. These problems raise questions and challenges for participatory practice and thinking. They point towards both difficulties and opportunities. We are identifying problems not to criticize or simply reject the importance of participatory governance. Problems in participatory governance are an enduring part of all worthwhile practice, driving creativity, understanding and skills according to Liza Irvin (2006). Political theorist argue that democratic participation especially participatory governance involves two mutually recursive components like the Political structure or culture that can enable or constrain participation

and the individual who possesses the ability and responsibility to ensure their political voice is included in political arenas. This study assesses the Problems encountered in the Implementation of Participatory Governance practices and the effects of participatory governance to the community by looking into the programs and projects implemented along Participatory Governance.

Many studies have been conducted revealing the different problems encountered in the implementation of Participatory governance. Democratic citizenship and participation is a complex problem. Complicated by individual, structural, cultural, political, economic and even psychological constraints and obstacles, there is no all-encompassing solution to this familiar issue according to Spano, S. (2003). Problems of Participation explore issues of authority, trust

and an ethos of participation among community members. Calls for increased participation are becoming ubiquitous throughout social life, from politics to community engagement, Heidi Burgess, (2006). For this reason, it is necessary that an institutional framework that supports the social forces outside the government like the civil societies be the best way to ensure good governance (De Leon, 2005) and be sensitive to the cultures and attitudes of the community member that are implementing participatory governance.

In this cited studies adhere that Problems on the implementation of Participatory Governance can be minimized if there is active participation and political will from the government leaders. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that many barangays and municipalities are still practicing the traditional processes of government affairs even if they encountered some problems. Thus, the study unfolds the Problems encountered on the implementation of Participatory Governance. Assessing the problems on the implementation of Participatory governance is really a great challenge for government leaders to really impose its sustainability up to the next generation.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed qualitative descriptive research design to provide rich and holistic insights into the people's views and actions as how they occur in the natural set-up (Creswell, 2010). The interview was utilized to collect data on individual's perspective and experience on the implementation of Participatory Governance to the community. This tool provided insights on the projects and programs implemented along Participatory Governance and its effect on them. Further, Focus Group Discussion was utilized to validate the information gathered during the individual interview to the key informants in the barangays. Table 1 shows the distribution of the key informants.

Table 1. Distribution of the Key Informants

Key Informants	Number
Barangay Officials	12
Expanded Barangay Development Council Members (EBDC)	20
Purok Presidents	14
Barangay Health Providers	10
Total	56

Among the eighteen (18) barangays in San Miguel, Surigao del Sur, Barangay Patong and Barangay San Roque were the only barangays implementing participatory form of governance. A total of 56 key informants were subjected to individual interview; twelve (12) were barangay officials, (20) members of Expanded Barangay Development Council (EBDC) who were composed of representatives from women sector, senior citizen, lupong tagapamayapa, purok president, resident midwife, barangay health work, barangay nutrition scholar, school principal and day care teacher, cooperatives and organizations. A written consent to the barangay captains of San Roque and Patong were sought. Upon approval, individual interviews were scheduled and conducted to the fifty six (56) key informants. FGD was also conducted during their general assembly to ensure maximum participation among members of the EBDC.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Different programs in Barangay San Roque and Barangay Patong, San Miguel, Surigao del Sur, Philippines were implemented through Participatory governance. These programs were classified under health, education, livelihood and governance program itself. Moreover, each of these programs consisted of many projects.

*Status of the Programs and Projects Implemented along Participatory Governance***Table 1.** *Status of the Programs, Projects and Activities*

Programs	Projects and Activities	Year Implemented	Status
Health	1. Participatory Annual Health Budgeting	2000	Not Sustained
	2. Provision of Trainings and Seminars	2001	Partially Sustained
	3. Annual Medical & Dental Mission	2003	Not Sustained
	4. Health Care Financing Scheme	2005	Not Sustained
	5. Installation of Botika ng Barangay	2007	Partially Sustained
	6. Construction of Level 3 Water System	2008	Sustained
	7. Construction of Elevated Health Center	2011	Functional
Education	1. Educational Support to 50 Children	2000	Not Sustained
	2. Financial Support to Teacher's Trainings and Seminars	2000	Not Sustained
	3. Provision of School Materials and Monthly Honorarium of Barangay Paid Teachers	2000	Sustained
	4. Construction of 2 Day Care Building	2007	Functional
Livelihood	1. Pig and Carabao Dispersal	1997	Not Sustained
	2. Provision of Livelihood Training and Seminars	2001	Not Sustained
	3. Provision of Agricultural Support Loan	2001	Not Sustained
	4. Provision of Pre and Post-Harvest Facilities	2005	Partially Sustained
Governance	1. Expansion of the Barangay Development Council Members	2001	Partially Sustained
	2. Monthly Purok Meeting	2001	Partially Sustained
	3. Bi-monthly Barangay General Assembly	2001	Partially Sustained
	5. Participatory Planning, Budgeting and Monitoring of Barangay Programs and Projects	2002	Partially Sustained

Table 1 shows the status of the programs, projects and activities which give benefits to the barangay constituents. Among all the health projects and activities, construction of level 3 water system and construction of elevated health center, which were joint projects by the barangay officials and Kalahi-Cidds, are the only once that are sustained and remained functional. The rest of the projects and activities were either partially sustained or not sustained.

Along projects and activities on education program, only the Provision of School Materials and Monthly Honorarium of Barangay Paid Teachers is sustained since the barangays Patong and San Roque prioritize education hence, they allocate funds for the honorarium of the teachers and acquisition of basic school materials. The two Day Care buildings are also functional which inspire the parents to send their toddlers to school and increase their thrust and loyalty to the government officials.

Sad to note that in all projects and activities under livelihood program were not sustained except for the provision of pre and post-harvest facilities which are partially sustained. However, among all the pre and post-harvest facilities provided by both government and non-government organizations, only solar dryer is functional while the rest were already damaged. The table also discloses that all projects and activities under governance program are partially sustained. Although projects and activities such as expansion of the Barangay Development Council members, monthly purok meeting, bi-monthly barangay general assembly and participatory planning, budgeting and Monitoring of barangay programs, projects and activities were still observe in the barangays, however these are not implemented regularly due to lack of participation of the community members.

Problems Encountered in the Implementation of Participatory Governance

Generally, the implementation of participatory governance in Barangays Patong and San Roques, San Miguel, Surigao del Sur was a

failure. It did not achieve its objective to have a management of governmental affairs that emphasize active people's participation represented by all sectors and organizations in the community in the planning, monitoring, implementing and evaluating of government programs and transactions. The reasons for this failure were classified as follows:

A. Change of Administration

The members of the Expanded Barangay Development Council (EBDC) came up with a Five-Year Development Plan which identified future plans, programs and projects implemented based on the ideas and values of participatory governance. However, some of the identified programs and projects were not implemented due to change of administration. Newly elected government officials did not include the identified programs and projects of the previous administration in the Annual Operation Plan (AOP) although they were still covered in the Five-Year Development Plan. They preferred to have new programs and projects. Hence, the sustainability of the programs and projects that were already implemented were either partially sustained or not sustained at all.

B. Distrust of the Community Members to the Government

Elected officials in the municipal level did not support the implementation of participatory governance. The responsibilities in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the programs and projects along participatory governance were left to the barangay officials. With this, community members developed negative impression and perspective about the sincerity of the elected officials to plan and implement programs and projects based on their true needs.

C. Insufficient People's Participation

People's participation is very fundamental in the implementation of participatory governance. Initially, the right to participate in a community's decision-making processes has

been accepted and embraced by the community members. When the elected officials withdrew their support, changed some policies for participatory governance and implemented new programs and projects that were not presented and agreed by the members of the Expanded Barangay Development Council, the community members became hesitant and less active in participating to the plans and programs of the barangay. Participation during general assembly and other community-related meetings was not also evident. As a consequence, there were non-regular conduct of general assemblies and purok meetings in the barangays. Programs and plans were done by the elected officials and there was little to no community consultation.

D. Difficulty in Reshaping Accountability

The need to reshape accountability is shared between government and other players. The community members were used to exercise the traditional way of governance. Thus, it became difficult to change its style due to their perspective. They were hesitant to embrace this new government system. Community members were hesitant to participate in any barangay activity due to bad experience from the past programs and projects promised by politicians that were not realized.

E. Vote Buying during Election

Vote buying during election contributed to be the problems encountered in implementing participatory governance because it attracts voters to vote candidates who are not really in Participatory Governance. Vote buying is a problem that will stay with people until such time that they are enlightened about it and how ridiculous it is. It is for this reason that community members who did not vote wisely resort to vote buying and were able to choose a candidate who is not pro-participatory governance. They are ashamed to question the elected officials since they contribute much of the candidate's victory in the political arena.

F. Poverty

Poverty is also one of the problems identified because it gives the community member not to attend some government related activities due to economic reasons. They are very busy in attending their economic activities that they do not care about the communities activities because they believed that the government cannot provide them nor can help uplift their economic status.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although participatory governance is an efficient and effective government strategy to ensure active participation, transparency and accountability of every member of the community in any government affairs, but its success depended on the ability of the elected officials in addressing challenges and issues that might come along the way. Substantial citizen engagement must be sustained over time only if the citizens come to support the institution and practices of participation and it can only be attained if they grow into a constituency that will not just engage but also defend against efforts to reduce participation. Roles and responsibilities of Governments and citizens in the participatory processes should be clear. Government should ensure that structures and processes should be in place for timely and adequate participation.

REFERENCES

1. Arala, Reynaldo B., (2009). Philippine Local Government Code of 1991. National Bookstore, Mandaluyong City.
2. Dannug, R. &Campanilla, R.(2005). Politics and Governance with Philippine Constitution. Campanilla Printing Press, Quezon City, Manila
3. Dannug, Roman R., (2005) Politics and Governance, Dannug&Campanilla Printing Press, Quezon City, Manila.
4. De Leon, Hector S., (2002).Philippine Constitution, Rex Printing Press Company, Inc., Quezon City, Manila

5. Fischer, F., & Rutgers, B. (2012). Participatory governance as Deliberative Empowerment.
6. Nollo, Mercedita S. (2008), Students Manual on the New Constitution, National Bookstore, Mandaluyong City.
7. Nebres, Abriel M., Political Science Made it Simple, 2007 Edition, National Bookstore, Mandaluyong City, Manila.
8. Tabunda, Manuel S., & Galang, M. M., (1991) A Guide to the Local Government Code of the Philippines, Rex Printing Company, Inc. Quezon City
9. Khan, Mushtaq H., June 2009, Governance, Growth and Poverty Reduction, University of London