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## **ABSTRACT**

Socialization is an important process of acquiring knowledge and skills. According to Sigmund Freud, it is a process that makes an individual get rid of his natural nature of being egocentric or self-centeredness (Palispis, 1996). Thus, socialization makes an individual aware, conscious, and responsible of his environment. It is through socialization that a person is brought to the level of his rationality and be the one he is known to be - the highest form of mammal. With the knowledge and skills that he acquires, one changes. However, this change could be deterioration or transformation, depending on how a person is influenced by his environment.

There are factors that influence the acquisition of knowledge and skills of a person and these factors contribute much on how one perceives and interprets the social world. These factors include the family, school, church, government, peer groups, mass media, and workplace. These factors are more popularly known as the agents of socialization (Henslin, 2002).

The family is the basic social institution and it is where a person is first socialized. This is possible with the indispensable role of the significant others which include the parents, brothers and sisters, and those closer relatives of the person whom s/he interacts with always. The long record of child dependency to these people from infancy to adulthood suggests that the family has a great influence in the shaping of character and behavior of a person. This is true when Santiago (2003) called the family as the "cradle of values".

The family, however faces problems that challenge its purpose of existence and organization to the members of the family. Family dispute is

among it. Family dispute refers to the conflict between husband and wife, parents and children, and in this study, in-laws.

Family dispute is universal but is relative, which suggests that family dispute is dealt with by members of a society based on cultural norms and practices depending on the nature of such society. Because no societal group is shielded from family disputes brought about by different factors, it is also good to consider the reactions of societies towards family dispute based on their capabilities.

In Quebec, Canada the government treats family disputes differently. Based on the research conducted by Dr. Anne Saris Jean Mathieu Potvin in their study entitled Family Dispute Resolution among Muslim Minorities in the West: Analysis of a Case Study of Muslim Women, Religious Counselors and Civil Actors in Montreal, family disputes in Quebec are mandatory settled by a judge and no settlements are made other than the judge ([www.brandeis.edu/hbi/pubs/AnneSaris.doc](http://www.brandeis.edu/hbi/pubs/AnneSaris.doc)).

In India, since there are Hindus and Muslims in the country, family disputes are held based on the laws governing the religious beliefs of each community. This means that family disputes are settled depending upon the norms established by authorities representing Hindus and Muslims.

In Ghana, Africa before, family disputes are resolved by the head of the family. If not settled, the family will consult the family clan and if it again fails, they consult the chief of the community.

Family disputes in the Philippines, like in Barangay Ampucao are treated distinctively from other disputes because of the consideration of family bond, customary laws based on ethnicity, nature of dispute, the disputants, and the barangay officials. Barangay Ampucao, though, is not a homogeneous community but a community that comprises people from various ethnicities which suggests that there are variations of ways in settling family disputes for the preservation of the family bond and the realization of its sanctified status upheld in the 1987 Philippine Constitution (De Leon, 2002).

Hence, the rationale of this study is to determine the nature of family disputes in Barangay Ampucao, Itogon, Benguet, and the causes categorized by ethnicity including the actions undertaken by the barangay officials in settling family disputes applying Katarungang Pambarangay Justice System vis-a-vis customary laws; and come-up with recommendations for improvement.

This research study assessed and analyzed the Family Dispute Settlements in a Multi-ethnic Society of Ampucao, Itogon, Benguet. The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the family disputes settled in a Multi-ethnic Society of Barangay Ampucao, Itogon, Benguet?
  - a. Marital Conflict caused by infertility, extra-marital relationship, and domestic violence;
  - b. Child Custody caused by separation of parents and irresponsible parenthood;
  - c. Financial Problems caused by misuse of family funds - gambling and alcoholism; and
  - d. Land dispute cause by the absence of written documents to prove land claims.
2. What actions are undertaken by the barangay authorities to settle family disputes?
  - a. Mediation;
  - b. Conciliation;
  - c. Reconciliation; and
  - d. Arbitration
3. What indigenous knowledge system and practices are observed in settling family disputes?
  - a. Tungtung;
  - b. Pagmanmanuk; and
  - c. Seek advise from a mambunong for instructions regarding rituals to be performed



The qualitative-descriptive method was adapted in this study. Descriptive social documentary, involved description, recording, analysis and interpretation of conditions of family disputes in Barangay Ampucao, Itogon, Benguet, which is the locale of the study.

In gathering the data, the researcher utilized a structured interview guide which included questions about the kinds of family dispute cases encountered by the barangay officials, causes of the family disputes, ethnicity of disputants in each family conflict, and the common family dispute in each ethnicity. The interview also included inquiry about the methods adopted by the barangay officials in settling disputes of families with different ethnicities. The interview also included inquiry about the adopted or observed indigenous knowledge system and practices or the customary practices in settling family disputes.

In general, the “triangulation method” was used where the data gathering procedure was interview as well as documentary analysis of the records of the barangay of cases specifically, Amicable Settlement File. Observation of dispute settlement procedure was also performed to verify the consistencies of claims of the respondents with regard to the actions they undertake to settle disputes. Responses were analyzed and interpreted based on the documents and observation.

## **Findings**

The following are the findings of the study:

1. The family disputes settled in the Multi-ethnic Society of Ampucao, Itogon, Benguet were Marital Conflicts, Child Custody, Financial Problems, and Land Disputes.
2. The actions that were undertaken by the barangay authorities of Ampucao in settling family disputes were mediation, conciliation, reconciliation, and arbitration.
3. The indigenous knowledge system and practices that were observe in settling family disputes were tungtung, pagmanmanuk, and in some

instances consultation of a mambunong for instructions regarding a ritual to be performed by the disputants.

## **Conclusions**

Based on the findings, the following are the results of this study research:

1. The four kinds of family disputes at Barangay Ampucao as mentioned above were caused by infertility, extra-marital relationship which occurs because of the residential set-up and the community system of gossip, and domestic violence. Child custody was caused by separation of parents and irresponsible parenthood. Financial Problem on the other hand was caused by gambling and alcoholism. Land disputes were caused by the absence of written documents to prove land claims. With regard to ethnicity, marital conflict which involves extra-marital relationship is mostly committed by the Ilocanos and Pangasinenses; while the other family disputes are committed by the Igorots and other ethnicities.
2. The customary laws which constitutes the indigenous knowledge system and practices remains to be the undisputed and most adhered process of settling family disputes in Barangay Ampucao as what is also provided in the Katarungang Pambarangay Law. The barangay officials and the disputants still value cultural social structure in maintaining peace and order in Barangay Ampucao.
3. The tungtung system which is the basic step of dispute settlement among indigenous groups of people is observed in settling family dispute in Barangay Ampucao, though, it is interpreted literally. Pagmanmanuk is also done to “seal” the settlement of the family dispute. However, the mambunong also takes its role when his advise for whatever ritual is needed to be done.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following are recommended by the researcher:

1. In order to avoid occurrences of extra-marital relationships, Philex Mines, where this marital problem mostly occur, has to organize seminars and workshops that tackle strengthening family relations, implement policies that would greatly punish extra-marital relationships like dismissal from employment when found guilty of committing extra-marital relationship. To avoid alcoholism and gambling that causes financial problem in Barangay Ampucao, the policy that is implemented at Philex which regulates consumption of alcohol and strictly prohibits gambling, should also be adopted by other sitios of Ampucao and be strictly implemented. Barangay Ampucao in general should prioritize the preservation of family by implementing policies and programs like observation of Family Day a year, which gives opportunity for families to spend time together. Instead of organizing beauty contests or other entertaining activities, Barangay Ampucao, has to rather construct family parks or even organize family games or sports to promote intimacy and concern for the well-being of other families by other families in the barangay.
2. The barangay officials have to be trained in efficiently settling family disputes. They can do this by participating in seminars or workshops on barangay dispute-processing. They should also be knowledgeable of customary practices adopted by previous family dispute settlers. The barangay officials can do this by reviewing amicably settled family disputes and by consulting elders in the community. The knowledge gained can also be reinforced by reading Igorota magazines which features igorot traditional practices not only about dispute processing but others also about the igorot culture. The barangay officials should has to organize a committee that would deal with the preservation of culture and strict observance of cultural social structures that promotes the preservation of peace and order of the barangay.
3. Tungtung as adopted to be used to settle family dispute, has to be treated the way it should be where elders of some members of the community are involved in finding ways to settle the conflict, and not as it is literary



interpreted and used by the barangay officials and disputants. In this way, the disputants would know the seriousness of the conflict they incurred and the burden it brings to the community. This will also prevent people in the barangay to avoid involving themselves into any form of dispute or conflict.

