

Island Community Governance and Coastal Resources Management



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Introduction

The interest in inquiring into the contemporary regime of island governance associated with coastal resource management has been triggered by the cogent realization that the Philippines, as an emerging economy, is dangerously poised at the threshold of the 21st century and confronted with a bleak future.

The threatening reality is characterized by widespread poverty in coastal areas, decline in volume in fishery operation and fish product quality, inordinate destruction of fish habitat like coral reefs and mangrove, and widespread pollution from land-based agricultural and industrial activities.

Introduction

In responding proactively to these debilitating realities, the study focuses on strengthening the governance of island communities through a carefully planned intervention for the protection and conservation of coastal resources as mechanisms for achieving the goals of sustainable development. Particular attention is given to the assessment of the islands' natural resources in relation to development needs, crafting governance mechanisms for the development and management of coastal resources, harnessing the role of civil society organizations associated with managing coastal resources.

Introduction

It is also focused on designing co-management initiatives and collaborative partnership with stakeholders, and increasing the effectiveness level of promotion and enhancement of coastal resource management obtaining in the scattered island communities.

Statement of the Problem

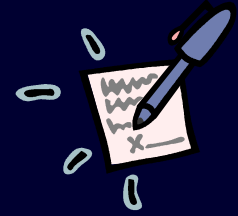


The problem of the study focused on the difficulty or lack of systematic assessment of *barangay* governance-coastal resource management relationships within the existing island-communities. Such deficiency could result in rising governance concerns and problems that could inhibit the acceleration of local development and the viable provision for a sustainable future.

Statement of the Problem

The problem has been aggravated further by the existence of threatened and underdeveloped coastal resource management structures, since there are no appropriate mechanisms for developing and operating co-management mechanisms between local government officials and the civil society.

Related Issues



1. What are the major natural resources of the island community? This query was raised to determine the nature and magnitude of resources that could become the adequate basis for crafting a sustainable development program for the island. This was also deemed important since island communities have greater need to become more viable and self-reliant communities, in view of the limitations that may be brought about through their being separated by bodies of water from the mainland.

Related Issues

- 2. Are there appropriate local governance mechanisms for the development and management of coastal resources to attain the desired level of integrated island development?** This problem was supported by the observation that, in spite of the existing legislation of coastal resources program for the municipality and *barangays*, there has been no successful mobilization of the local government machinery in identifying, developing, and evaluating the extent through which the coastal resources management program has been implemented within the island communities.

Related Issues

3. Are there existing civil society groups and organizations engaged in coastal resources management? What are their roles affecting the development of these coastal resources that could have implications on the governance of these island communities? These questions were considered important in determining the capabilities of civil society groups and organizations in coastal resource management, as well as their participation in governing the island communities.

Related Issues

4. How is coastal resources management utilized in terms of co-management initiatives obtaining in the island community? As a corollary, has the island government provided conditions for the promotion of co-management arrangements with civil society groups and other individuals? These situations have to be examined in view of the fact that the concept of governance highlights the collaborative partnership dimensions between and among government, civil society, and the private sector coming together to be able to create an ecologically sustainable island community.

Related Issues

5. Are there effective mechanisms for the promotion and enhancement of coastal resources management in the different island communities studied? This query was raised to find out the level of effectiveness by which island governance has designed and applied appropriate and adequate mechanisms for the promotion and enhancement of coastal resources management in the island communities. If so, the quality of governance of these island communities must functionally relate to the viability and sustainability of managing coastal resources for the desired levels of development of said island communities.

Hypothesis

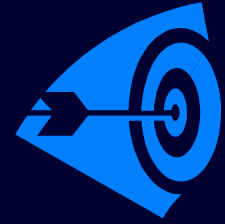


1. The island communities do not have the type of natural coastal resources that can be tapped and explored for crafting and implementing a sustainable development program.
2. The barangay as a local government unit has no functional governance mechanisms for the development and management of the islands' coastal resources to attain an integrated island development.

Hypothesis

3. The roles and performance of existing civil society groups and organizations have not resulted in productive collaboration and partnership with *barangay* officials for the development and management of the islands' coastal resources.
4. The aims, terms, and conditions of co-management initiatives obtaining in different island communities have not been realized through the collaboration of civil society and local government officials.
5. There are no appropriate measures to promote and improve coastal resource management for developing sustainable, viable, and self-reliant island communities.

Objectives



General Objective:

To assess the co-management relationships between island governance and coastal resource management in chosen island communities.

Objectives

Specifically, the study seeks to identify:

1. Identify the existing natural coastal resources within the island communities which are available to be tapped for sustainable development interventions.
2. Describe the governance mechanisms the municipal government has set up and utilized to assist the different island communities in protecting and preserving their coastal resources for sustainable livelihood and improved way of life.

3. Specify the roles and co-management participation of civil society groups and organizations in collaborating with local government officials in coastal resources management.
4. Indicate how co-management mechanisms have improved coastal resources management with island governance support to promote co-management initiatives for sustainable development.

5. Present doable measures to promote and enhance local government's performance in managing coastal resources for building sustainable, viable, and self-reliant communities.

Analytical Framework

Independent Variable

**Island Community
Governance**

*Socio-economic
Profile of Island
Community,
Barangay Leaders,
Household Heads,
and Civil Society
Members*

*Community
Governance
Structures*



Process Variable

**Co-management
Operations**

*Participation of
Barangay Leaders and
Civil Society
Performance in CRMP
Operations/Activities*

*Implementation of Co-
Management Schemes
for Coastal Resources
Management*

*Promotion and
Enhancement of
Coastal Resources
Management*



Dependent Variable

**Effective Coastal
Resource
Management**

*Improved Island
Community
Governance of
Coastal Resources*

*Increased Level of
Productivity and
Income from Coastal
and Marine Resources*

*Sustainability/Viability
of Coastal Resources
Management Program
For Self-Reliance*


Research Methodology



By adopting a combination of descriptive and associative approaches in research, the study characterizes the natural resources obtaining in the islands and profiles the people living therein. It describes the existing practices of island governance and the condition of coastal resources.

Research Methodology

It investigates the relationships among barangay officials, household heads, and representatives of civil society as they participate in developing and managing coastal resources, solicit the involvement of civil society organizations, collaborate with various stakeholders in crafting co-management schemes, and promote coastal resource management to enhance the integrated development of the island communities.



Research Methodology

Two hundred one respondents are randomly chosen proportionate to barangay population. Categorized by sector, these respondents consist of 133 household heads, 47 barangay officials, and 21 representatives of civil society organizations.

Primary data are drawn from responses to the interview schedule and questionnaire. Secondary data are taken from the barangay and municipal records, as well as publications related to governance and management of coastal resources.

Research Methodology

The statistical analysis uses descriptive and inferential statistics, which relies on chi-square tests to measure significance in differences of responses. The corresponding contingency coefficient is computed to show levels of association among various sectors, given the particular area or subject of inquiry.

Significant Findings of the Study



On the Natural and Physical Resources of Island Communities

In terms of *physical and human resources* as necessary inputs to coastal resource management, the island *barangays* are relatively limited. The average size of scattered land areas approximates 327 hectares which can not provide the necessary physical support for an average of 1,627 of the population in outlying island communities.

People's livelihood is mainly dependent on fishing activities, with supplements of rice, corn, and root crops, as well as livestock growing and poultry-raising.

The average household monthly income amounts to less than Php 3T, which is below poverty level. The economic hardships endemic in island *barangays* are expected consequences of confined productivity and income, accompanied by low academic achievements and occupational capabilities of the residents.

Their education attainment seldom reaches college level, and results in very limited productive activities and organizational membership. Considering the recognized dependency on fishery-related activities, the development and management of coastal resources must be given the top priority.

Although the different island barangays have the types of natural and physical resources that can be tapped and explored for implementing the coastal management program, the quantity of production volume and corresponding income earned are not adequate for viable and sustainable livelihood.

The natural sources of water are adequate for irrigation and stretches of coastline are potentially available for tourism development. However, these have not been functionally explored to support production as means for generating income urgently needed by the island residents.

On Local Government Mechanisms for Development and Management of Coastal Resources

On the upside, an overwhelming majority of respondents recognize the high influence in the development and management of coastal resources of the recognized responsibility of the barangay to pass appropriate legislations for coastal resource management programs (98.9%), the creation of the position of CRM officer (97.9%), the visible presence of coastal watch groups for security of municipal fishing waters (96.4%), and the proper conduct of government assessment of the CRM program in the barangay (92.4%).

On the downside, very low influence level is noted in the limited knowledge of the establishment of CRM office in the barangay (1.1%), the inadequate incentive system associated with CRMP (42.6%), the bounded knowledge of the provincial CRM framework developed by the province (43.5%), and failure to maximize the use of capital for CRM (44.6%). The test statistics indicates significant findings ($p < 0.05$) concerning the knowledge of the implementation of CRM programs, and the knowledge of the province having developed the provincial CRM framework. The association of various sectors is more substantial in these instances.

On Civil Society Groups/Organizations and their Roles in Coastal Resource Management

The findings indicate a generally downside trend. The least influential indicators consist of very limited involvement of NGOs/POs as members of sectoral committees in the barangay development council (4%), the unrecognized tangible results of CRMP in the barangay (6.5%), the ineffective solicitation of the participation of NGOs/POs in the implementation of CRM programs in the barangay (6.6%), and the limited endorsement of the Memorandum of Agreement with civil society organizations by the barangay (14%).

The test statistics indicates highly significant findings ($p < 0.01$) in responses on ineffective solicitation of NGOs/POs in CRM implementation, and significant findings ($p < 0.05$) corresponding to limited endorsement of the MOA with CSOs, and limited involvement of NGOs/POs in sectoral committees. The association of sectoral groups is more pronounced in the endorsement of MOA with CSOs, and the solicitation of NGO/PO participation in CRM implementation. These findings have negative implications in managing coastal resources in the barangay.

On Co-Management Mechanisms Facilitated in Coastal Resource Management

On the upside, a greater majority of respondents recognize the use of barangay funds for communications regarding coastal resource management (80.1%). On the downside, the minority of respondents assert the limited influence of the limited knowledge of the presence of fishermen's organizations in the barangay (29.1%), the limited training interventions to educate and mobilize people in campaigning for CRM (38.9%), and inadequate practice of maximizing resources for CRMP (44.7%).

The test statistics reveals a highly significant difference ($p < 0.01$) corresponding to the knowledge on presence of fishermen's organization, and a significant difference ($p < 0.05$) concerning the establishment of the Barangay Fisheries and Aquatic Resource Management Councils (BFARMCs). Sectoral association is more adequate with regard to the presence of fishermen's organization, use of barangay funds for communications, and establishment of BFARMCs.

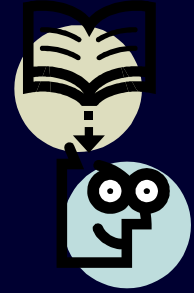
On Promotion and Enhancement of Coastal Resource Management

The findings generally indicate that there are appropriate measures to promote and improve coastal resource management for developing sustainable, viable, and self-reliance island communities.

The components that strongly influence such favorable condition include giving top priority to CRM in the development of the barangay (98.3%), and supporting the movement to protect coastal resources (92.8%). Factors of considerable influence involve giving priority to the promotion of CRM activities by LGUs (86.8%), and supporting the centering of CRM and marine ecosystems in the environmental program of the barangay (82.2%).

The test statistics reveals that the differences in responses concerning the decision of LGUs in giving priority to the promotion of CRM are significant ($p < 0.05$). The association among various sectors is more substantial as regards the LGUs' decision to give CRM promotion a priority, and the support for centering CRM and marine ecosystems in the barangay's environmental program.

Conclusions



On the Natural and Physical Resources of Island Communities

The null hypothesis specifying that *the island communities do not have the type of natural coastal resources that can be tapped and explored for crafting and implementing a sustainable development program* is rejected.

On Local Government Mechanisms for Development and Management of Coastal Resources

The null hypothesis which provides that *the barangay as a local government unit has no functional governance mechanisms for the development and management of the islands' coastal resources to attain an integrated island development* is rejected.

On Civil Society Groups/Organizations and their Roles in Coastal Resource Management

The null hypothesis indicating that *the roles and performance of existing civil society groups and organizations have not resulted in productive collaboration and partnership with barangay officials for the development and management of the islands' coastal resources is accepted.*

On Co-Management Mechanisms Facilitated in Coastal Resource Management

The null hypothesis providing that *the aims, terms, and conditions of co-management initiatives obtaining in different island communities have not been realized through the collaboration of civil society and local government officials* is rejected.

On Promotion and Enhancement of Coastal Resource Management

The null hypothesis specifying that *there are no appropriate measures to promote and improve coastal resource management for developing sustainable, viable, and self-reliant island communities* is rejected.

Recommendations



☺ Functional involvement of civil society organizations, like NGOs and POs, in *barangay* governance as responsible members of different sectoral committees.

This recommendation is justified by the need for NGOs and POs to become more active in the *barangay* development council when formulating CRM policies and in crafting the pertinent implementing rules and regulations to operationally put these policies into the playing field.

The other reason is to dispel the uncalled for reputation of NGOs and POs that their participation in sectoral committees is at best nominal rather than substantial and purposive in particular aspects of *barangay* governance, such as the committees on environment, agriculture and fisheries, and fiscal and economic policy in the barangay development council.

Recommendations

☺ Development of mutually acceptable criteria for ensuring tangible results of CRMP operations.

This puts emphasis on clear indicators of success or failure of CRMP operations which must be initially agreed upon by every individual or sector concerned. Invoking the importance of logic, it follows that when *barangay* governance has been clearly defined in definitely quantifiable terms, or developed measurable indicators on qualified results, it is easy to measure the outputs, impact, and outcome resulting from having achieved the goals of the CRM program.

Recommendations

☺ Formulation and design of effective strategies for solicitation of participation of civil society organizations in implementation of *barangay*-based CRMP.

This recommendation is properly reasoned out for giving more significance to a more focused, thoughtful, and socially sensitive approach in enlisting and putting into proper use the productive efforts, resources, and expertise of NGOs and POs for managing and assisting the *barangay*-based CRM.

When the combined quantity and quality of CRMP results are highly recognized, they can build on the reputation of having achieved the ‘best practice’ in coastal resource management.

Recommendations

☺ Effective and persuasive endorsement of Memorandum of Agreement with civil society organizations in the *barangay*.

This recommendation elevates into an enforceable contact the collaboration and co-management schemes between the civil society organizations and the *barangay* as formally provided for in the Memorandum of Agreement. With the force of law, the contracting parties are made mutually cognizant of their rights and prerogatives, as well as their duties and obligations.

Thank you!