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RESEARCH ARTICLE

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY SAFETY: AWARENESS OF BARANGAY PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS ON THEIR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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ABSTRACT

This study presents a comprehensive analysis of the awareness and performance of Barangay Public Safety Officers (BPSOs) in Lapu Lapu City in various barangay of focusing on their duties, responsibilities, and adherence to regulatory standards outlined in Memorandum Circular No. 2003-42. The data, drawn from a structured questionnaire administered to respondents, reveals disparities in the distribution of tanods and highlights challenges in data collection due to the dynamic schedules of BPSOs. While BPSOs demonstrate commendable awareness in certain duties, including crime prevention and coordination with local authorities, there are identified areas for improvement, such as preserving accident scenes, conducting random searches, and disseminating information about regulatory frameworks. The study recommends targeted training programs, flexible data collection strategies, and collaborative initiatives to enhance public safety efforts within barangays. Continuous monitoring, community engagement, and periodic surveys are proposed to foster a responsive public safety framework, recognizing the importance of effective communication and the need for ongoing evaluation. This abstract encapsulates the key findings and recommendations, contributing to the advancement of BPSOs' effectiveness in ensuring the safety and security of barangay communities.

INTRODUCTION

The community places significant expectations on the performance of law enforcement officers, anticipating a heightened sense of security among citizens when their roles are effectively carried out. In the Philippines, Barangay Tanods also known as Barangay Public Safety Officers (BPSOs) serve as front liners at the lowest level of law enforcement, appointed by Barangay Chairman, they collaborate with the police in maintaining peace, preventing crimes, and executing basic duties. While not part of the Philippine National Police, they operate under the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), which provides training and defines their responsibilities. Despite being described as volunteers, the BPSO receive a modest honorarium from the Local Government, demonstrating their dedication to serving the community. Although lacking the same authority as police officers, they fulfill unique functions crucial in smaller communities like barangays. Memorandum Circular No. 2003-42 outlines the professionalization guidelines for Barangay Tanods, specifying their duties as BPSO. This study seeks to assess the awareness of BPSO regarding their functions within the community and the extent to which they apply this awareness in their daily public service duties.

Additionally, the researchers aim to identify areas where BPSO may be lacking in fulfilling their responsibilities. The intervention program developed by the researchers aims to assist BPSO in enhancing their performance and meeting their duties more effectively. This study was anchored on Malcolm Knowles' Adult Learning Theory of Andragogy Theory. Andragogy Theory emphasizes that adults are self-directed and expect to take responsibility for their decisions. In practical terms, andragogy means that instructions for adults need to focus more on the process, and less on the content being taught. According to the principles of andragogy, adults need to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their instruction, that experience including mistakes provides the basis for learning activities. Adults are most interested in learning subjects that have immediate relevance to their job or personal life, and that adult learning is problem centered, rather than content-oriented (Knowles, 1984). Enlisting the assistance of the community should be emphasized as they know the area and the people more. Close coordination with the community will free more resources of the police for more pressing needs, and at the same time giving a sense of responsibility to the people as they participate in making the environment safer (Williams, 1998). Thus, the implementation plans for community policing vary from agency to agency, and from community to community. The appropriate implementation strategy depends on conditions within the law enforcement agency and the community embarking on

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community policing. Successful implementation requires that the police and members of the community understands the underlying philosophy of community policing and have a true commitment to the community policing strategy. Communication, cooperation, coordination, collaboration, and change are the keys to putting community policing into action. With community policing, citizens share has to be done. The traditional mode of policing has lost its credibility and has increasingly been outmoded. Community partnership in policing is now the trend. This approach is not alien to democracy but rather an integral part of it. The main challenge now is how to gain the cooperation of the community (Vergara, 1983). Rivera (2002) stressed that training of members of barangay tanod is highly desirable and instills greater trust and loyalty in the organization. The training design should aim at making the members general practitioners in social defense or crime prevention, rather than limiting them to law enforcement activities. Moreover, Perater (2012) revealed that the job satisfaction of BPSO members is dependent on two things: motivation factors and hygiene needs. For BPSO to perform excellently and work happily, more trainings and salary increases will further improve their performance.

A study on the level of public involvement in crime reporting revealed that apathy and non-involvement of the public is very high. Fear of reprisal is one of the main reasons cited by the respondents. The obvious implication of this is that there is a need to develop a program whereby the general public can be educated, trained and motivated to cooperate and develop a sense of propriety for their safety and security (Luga, 1988). Leones (2006) in a paper underscore the importance of peace and security in local communities. According to the author this idea is central to good governance. For good governance consists of proving a safe environment for everybody where individuals can pursue their goals and ideals without fear and freedom from threats. Leones recognized the peculiar situation of the Philippines where crime and problem related to peace and order seems to be a perennial problem. But she positively argues that there is always the opportunity to arouse commitment and work among the Filipinos. This can be achieved by a holistic approach to peace and security Considering, the roots and the basic origin of these conflicts and lack of peace. An empowered citizenry is the means by which community involvement in policing can be realized. Society has its part to play in maintaining peace and order. A sense of ownership can enhance citizen pro-activeness in curbing criminality. These activities cannot be accomplished by the Philippine National Police alone. There should be a willingness on the part of the stakeholders to participate. Moreover, the author discussed the legal framework of peace and order in the Philippines. The barangay system is one of the areas mentioned. The barangay being the focal point of policy implementations has the capacity to engage other members of the local community to take part and to take interest. The varied security interventions in the community such as the ronda system and surveillance system were discussed in the paper only to prove the usefulness of the barangay system in terms of peace keeping. Peace and order is an essential ingredient in maintaining economic development, social order, and political stability. A state of peace and order assists the growth of investments, generates more opportunities for employment, and attracts more tourists. Foremost in the government's agenda is the promotion of peace and order. This is exemplified in the city's continuous and active campaign

against criminality. However, threats to peace and order continue due to undermanned police force as one reason. Take for example the City of Baguio it has a total of 436 police officers. The ideal rate is 1 police officer for every 500 constituents. With approximately 325,000 population of the city, the ratio then falls to 1 officer to 745 constituents. With this scenario, there may be certain functions which the police force cannot immediately discharge especially with respect to the implementation of national and local laws within barangays. This is where the role of the barangay tanods would come in. Although not entirely equipped with the authority to discharge functions and power similar to the police, they play an important role in maintaining peace and order within the barangay level, to somehow augment the performance of functions of the police force (SunStar, February 24, 2011. Retrieved, January 06, 2015). In this regard, the former Department of Interior and Local Government Secretary Jose Lina announced that the DILG has begun its training program for over 700,000 barangay tanods auxiliary forces nationwide. This is an effort to make them effective partners of the police in the maintenance of peace and order in the community, and in the fight against crime. Lina emphasized that the training program is in line with the Arroyo administration's efforts to promote and sustain genuine and lasting peace and order in the country with the help of barangay tanods. According to Sec. Lina, the skills and capabilities of barangay tanods as public safety officers will be developed. Furthermore, the DILG chief said the project is a capacity-building and skills training activity. This is also a proficiency development endeavor to ensure that the barangay tanods develop a certain degree of learning and expertise. This is to enable them to perform their commitment as peace and public safety officers with a high sense of integrity and responsibility (Manila Bulletin, March 12, 2004. Retrieved, January 06, 2015). Lina (2001) stressed that an ideal community is one wherein its members practice to learn and live together in peace with one another as good neighbors. It is universally recognized that the major problem facing humanity today are mainly to the preservation of peace. With the global phenomena of terrorism, law enforcement simply cannot perform peacekeeping in isolation. The community and the police have important roles to play, recognizing that all must share in the directions that affect lives. Thus, the tanods must not only have the skills required but must also have the awareness. This awareness will enhance their ability to perform their duties and responsibilities in the service of the community where they live as well.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study utilized the descriptive method using a research made questionnaire.

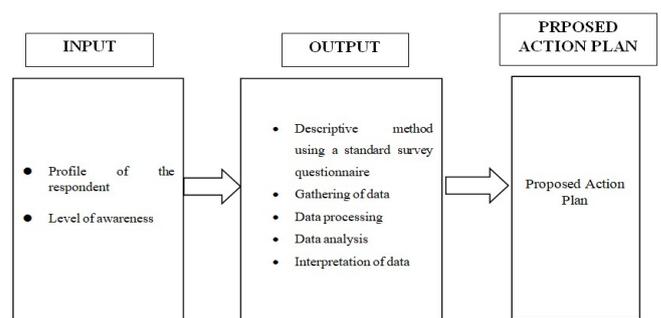


Figure 1. Below shows the flow of research

This study was conducted in a first class highly-urbanized city in the province of Cebu, which is Lapu-Lapu City. The city occupies most of Mactan Island; it is linked to Mandaue City on mainland Cebu by the Mactan-Mandaue Bridge and Marcelo Fernan Bridge. Lapu-lapu City is politically subdivided into 30 Barangays where the researchers focused on three barangays in conducting the studies namely; Barangay Pajo, Barangay Gun-ob, and Barangay Basak. Barangay Pajo has the smallest land area of the three identified barangays. It occupies a land area of 154.1 hectares, and has an estimated population of 26,000 as of 2014. The barangay residents make a living through small-scale industries such as garments manufacturing, guitar-making and retailing business. It is dotted with a number of motels, malls and industrial buildings which contributes to its high yearly income.

Barangay Gun-ob is composed of 21 puroks with a population of 46,000 as of 2014. It has a land area of 2,269.183 hectares. It also boasts of a number of commercial establishments, and is home to several schools, churches and hospital. The residents thrive on the retailing business as a way of living. Barangay Basak is one of the busiest and highly urbanized barangays of Lapu-Lapu City. The entire barangay covers a land area of 16,904 hectares which makes it one of the biggest barangays of the city and has a population of 70,000 as of 2014. It is known for its many commercial zones such as MEPZ II and III which house many commercial complexes employing thousands of workers. The respondents of this study were the BPSO members or barangay tanods of the selected barangays in Lapu-Lapu City. Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents.

Barangay	Population	Sample
Basak	40	32
Gun-ob	26	21
Pajo	36	27
TOTAL	102	80

Table 1 displays the distribution of respondents across various barangays investigated in the study. The data in Table 1 reveals disparities in both population and the number of tanods among the barangays. Specifically, Basak has 40 tanods, Gun-ob has 26, and Pajo has 36. Contrary to the stipulations of Memorandum Circular No. 2003-42, which dictates a maximum of 20 tanods per barangay, these three barangays have surpassed the prescribed limit. In barangay Basak, 32 out of the 40 tanods were successfully surveyed, as some were absent during the study. Simultaneously, barangay Gun-ob had 21 respondents out of 26 tanods, and barangay Pajo had 27 respondents out of 36 tanods. This was attributed to the absence or night shift duty of some tanods, presenting challenges in achieving a comprehensive survey of all tanods. The research instrument employed in this study was a researcher-developed questionnaire with two sections. The first section focused on the personal profile of respondents, including age, gender, educational attainment, and length of service as barangay tanods. The second section assessed the level of awareness of barangay public safety officers. The third section consisted of a twelve-item questionnaire on the duties and responsibilities of tanods as outlined in DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2003-42. This circular, dated March 10, 2003, serves as a guide for professionalizing barangay tanods and was adopted as indicators for assessing the awareness of Barangay Public Safety Officers (BPSOs). Respondents were required to mark their level of awareness on a four-point scale: (4) Very Aware, (3) Aware, (2) Less Aware, and (1) Not Aware.

Data Collection: The researchers were divided into two teams to send transmittal letters to the respective Barangay Captains of Pajo, Gun-ob, and Basak. Upon receiving approval, copies of the questionnaires were distributed to the respondents in the barangay, including the Barangay Public Safety Officers (BPSOs) or barangay tanods.

Data Processing: Various statistical tools were employed in processing the collected data. Simple percentage was utilized to succinctly summarize, analyze, and interpret the respondents' profiles. Additionally, weighted mean was employed to summarize, analyze, and interpret the level of awareness among barangay public safety officers regarding their duties and responsibilities. The researcher applied hypothetical mean ranges, each with corresponding interpretations, in this analysis.

Scale	Weight	Interpretation
4	3.26-4.00	Very Aware (VA)
3	2.51-3.25	Aware (A)
2	1.76-2.50	Less Aware (LA)
1	1.00-1.75	Not Aware (NA)

RESULTS

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of data from the respondents. This section presents the profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, educational attainment, and length of service as Barangay Tanods.

Table 2. Profile of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18-30	3	4
31-40	21	26
41-50	35	44
51 & Above	21	26
Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	80	100
Education Attainment	Frequency	Percentage
Elementary Level/Graduate	10	12
High School Level/Graduate	50	63
College Level	17	21
College Graduate	3	4
Length of Service	Frequency	Percentage
5-8 months	3	4
9 months – 2 years	21	26
2-5 years	12	15
5 years & above	44	55
Overall Total:	80	100

Table 2 highlights a noteworthy trend, indicating that a substantial 40% of the survey participants fall within the age range of 41-50, totaling 35 respondents. This demographic composition not only signifies a matured respondent group but also adds credibility to the reliability of their responses. The data unveils a male-dominated respondent pool, aligning with the prevailing trend in the dominance of males in the Barangay Public Safety Officer (BPSO) profession. Furthermore, a significant majority of respondents possess a high school education, emphasizing the prevailing educational background in this role. Notably, a considerable number of participants have served as BPSOs for over five (5) years, shedding light on the absence of standardized qualifications for this position.

Table 3. Level of Awareness on Patrolling

Patrolling	Mean	Interpretation
1. Assisting the barangay officials in preventing crimes and promoting public safety through patrol/ "ronda".	3.63	Very Aware
2. Reporting of any disturbance or untoward incidents to the concerned offices.	3.48	Very Aware
3. Preserving the crime scene until the proper authorities arrive.	3.48	Very Aware
4. Conducting roving patrol every night.	3.63	Very Aware
5. Conducting field interview of persons not from the barangay.	3.50	Very Aware
Overall Mean:	3.54	Very Aware

Table 4. Level of Awareness in terms of Information Gathering and Reporting

Information Gathering and Reporting	Mean	Interpretation
1. Reporting to the concerned barangay officials or through hotline 117 in the occurrence of any crime, fire, accident, public disturbance and environmental degradation activities and other untoward incident in the barangay.	3.55	Very Aware
2. Monitoring the presence of suspicious person, criminals, and other lawless elements within their jurisdiction.	3.35	Very Aware
3. Conducting surveillance on crime breeding areas within the barangay/ puroks.	3.46	Very Aware
4. Reporting observations/findings to the proper authorities or through hotline 117.	3.40	Very Aware
5. Monitoring the activities of suspicious person, criminals, and other lawless elements within their jurisdiction.	3.36	Very Aware
Overall Mean:	3.42	Very Aware

Table 5. Level of Awareness in terms of Information Gathering and Reporting

Information Gathering and Reporting	Mean	Interpretation
1. Assisting the implementation of the fire code of the Philippines.	3.24	Aware
2. Detecting all forms of fire hazard and other public safety hazards/violations.	3.47	Very Aware
3. Inspecting abandoned houses and buildings in the barangay to make sure it is not made into a drug den or a place where juveniles or desirable elements stay.	3.37	Very Aware
4. Coordinating their findings appropriate government agency.	3.32	Very Aware
5. Assisting the PNP in inspecting vehicles in the conduct of checkpoints.	3.56	Very Aware
Overall Mean:	3.39	Very Aware

Table 6. Level of Awareness in terms of Traffic Control

Traffic Control	Mean	Interpretation
1. Assisting the facilitation and smooth flow of traffic in the barangay.	3.59	Very Aware
2. Escorting smooth and unimpeded travel to the cemetery during burials.	3.40	Very Aware
3. Assisting the smooth flow of parades in their barangay.	3.54	Very Aware
4. Assisting traffic enforcers in facilitating the flow of traffic in school zones.	3.41	Very Aware
5. Assisting traffic enforcers in preserving traffic accident from onlookers.	3.36	Very Aware
Overall Mean:	3.46	Very Aware

Table 7. Level of Awareness in terms of Arrest and Search

Arrest and Search	Mean	Interpretation
1. Assisting the police and lupong tagapamayapa in the execution of warrants.	3.44	Very Aware
2. Arresting/ Apprehending violators of barangay ordinance.	3.46	Very Aware
3. Conducting random search of abandoned structures	3.32	Very Aware
4. Assisting the police in tracking the whereabouts of missing persons in their area of responsibility.	3.37	Very Aware
5. Assisting the police in arresting escaped prisoners who are in the barangay.	3.36	Very Aware
Overall Mean:	3.39	Very Aware

Table 8. Level of Awareness in terms of Crime Information Drive and Campaign

Crime Information Drive and Campaign	Mean	Interpretation
1. Coordinating closely with the barangay officials and police/local authorities in the drive against all forms of crimes.	3.70	Very Aware
2. Assisting in information drive regarding the negative effects of drugs in the community.	3.52	Very Aware
3. Informing, disseminating and educating people on Dengue.	3.47	Very Aware
4. Assisting the dissemination of information in the barangay with regards to the Fire Code of the Philippines.	3.44	Very Aware
5. Assisting in the information drive on segregation of trash/waste in the barangay.	3.45	Very Aware
Overall Mean:	3.52	Very Aware

Additionally, it's crucial to recognize that the tenure of BPSOs is closely tied to the term of office of the respective Barangay Captains, underscoring an important aspect of their service dynamics.

Level of Awareness: Tables 3 to 8 presents the level of awareness on duties and responsibilities of the BPSO in terms of patrolling, information gathering and reporting, inspection, traffic control, arrest and search, and crime information drive and campaign.

These level of awareness were scaled into four; namely: fully aware, which means that the respondents fully understood their duties and responsibilities; aware, which means that the respondents understood their duties and responsibilities; less aware, which means that the level of understanding of respondents was less; and not aware which means that the respondents did not have any idea on their duties and responsibilities on the community. Table 3 reveals intriguing insights into BPSO awareness concerning patrolling responsibilities.

The data underscores that the highest mean is attributed to the proficient execution of roving patrols every night, as well as actively assisting barangay officials in crime prevention and promoting public safety through patrol or "ronda." This robust performance suggests that barangay tanods possess a commendable depth of knowledge and are well-versed in these specific duties, showcasing a commendable level of expertise. On the other hand, the lowest mean in BPSO awareness related to patrolling pertains to reporting disturbances or untoward incidents to the relevant offices and preserving the crime scene until the proper authorities arrive. Despite registering as the lowest mean, it's noteworthy that there still exists a commendable level of awareness in these areas. This implies that while some BPSOs exhibit a solid understanding, there is room for improvement, and additional training or refresher courses may prove beneficial in enhancing their proficiency, particularly in the realm of patrolling responsibilities.

Table 4 presents compelling findings, indicating that the highest mean in terms of BPSO's awareness of information gathering and reporting is attributed to promptly reporting incidents to concerned barangay officials or through the hotline 117. This outcome signifies that BPSOs exhibit a high level of vigilance, visibility, and approachability. The residents' trust and confidence in their safety and security are evident, highlighting the effectiveness of BPSOs in promptly responding to various incidents within the barangay. Conversely, the data also reveals that monitoring the presence of suspicious individuals, criminals, and other lawless elements within their jurisdiction has the lowest mean. This suggests a potential area for improvement, emphasizing the need for BPSOs to enhance their knowledge and skills in effective coordination with the proper authorities. Strengthening these capabilities would contribute to a more comprehensive approach in maintaining the safety and security of the barangay, fostering a proactive stance against potential threats. Table 5 provides insightful findings regarding BPSO's awareness in terms of inspection duties. The data highlights that the highest mean is associated with BPSOs assisting the PNP in inspecting vehicles during checkpoints. This observation suggests that barangay tanods have undergone effective orientation and possess comprehensive knowledge about this specific duty, indicating a commendable level of proficiency. Conversely, the lowest mean in terms of inspection duty awareness pertains to assisting in the implementation of the Fire Code of the Philippines. This signifies a need for improvement in BPSOs' understanding of and adherence to the Fire Code. It implies that BPSOs should undergo orientation sessions to enhance their awareness and understanding of the Fire Code of the Philippines, ensuring they are well-informed and capable of effectively assisting in its implementation. This targeted training would contribute to a more well-rounded and informed approach in fulfilling their responsibilities related to inspection duties.

Table 6 unveils a high level of awareness among respondents regarding their duties and responsibilities in traffic control. Despite this overall heightened awareness, it is noteworthy that the lowest mean pertains to the aspect of assisting traffic enforcers in preserving traffic accident scenes from onlookers. This implies a specific area where enhancement or refresher training is warranted for barangay tanods. The data suggests that while there is a commendable overall understanding of traffic control duties, there is room for improvement,

particularly in the aspect of managing traffic accident scenes. To bolster their performance, it is advisable for barangay tanods to undergo targeted training and refreshers. This approach aims not only to enhance their proficiency in assisting traffic enforcers during accidents but also to improve their overall effectiveness in handling diverse traffic control scenarios. Table 7 presents compelling insights into BPSO's awareness regarding arrest and search duties. The data underscores that the highest mean is associated with barangay tanods arresting or apprehending violators of barangay ordinances, indicating their proactive engagement and familiarity with this crucial aspect of their responsibilities. This suggests a commendable level of dedication and expertise in executing their duties effectively. Furthermore, the table reveals that the lowest mean, albeit still at a very aware level, pertains to conducting random searches of abandoned structures. While their awareness is noteworthy, it suggests an area where BPSOs can benefit from improvement and additional training. This underscores the importance of targeted efforts to enhance their proficiency in conducting random searches, emphasizing the need for a refresher to reinforce their knowledge and competence not only in this specific duty but also across various aspects of their responsibilities. This approach aims to ensure a well-rounded and consistently high level of performance in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities. Table 8 presents a comprehensive view of BPSO's level of awareness in terms of crime information drive and campaign. The data highlights that the highest mean is associated with barangay tanods coordinating closely with barangay officials and local authorities in the concerted effort against all forms of crimes. This observation suggests a robust relationship between BPSOs and local authorities, indicative of a well-established understanding of their specialized field. Moreover, it signifies that BPSOs are approachable in executing their duties and responsibilities, fostering a collaborative environment in the fight against crime. On the other hand, the table reveals that the lowest mean in BPSO's awareness pertains to assisting in the dissemination of information in the barangay regarding the Fire Code of the Philippines. Despite being categorized as "very aware," this signals a need for enhancement to elevate their performance. This emphasizes the importance of refining their understanding in this specific area and underscores the broader need for improvement across various duties and responsibilities. A targeted approach, including training and refresher courses, is recommended to ensure a continual enhancement of their proficiency and effectiveness in fulfilling their roles.

DISCUSSION

The comprehensive analysis of survey data across multiple tables offers valuable insights into the awareness and performance of Barangay Public Safety Officers (BPSOs) in various duties and responsibilities. The findings suggest an overall commendable level of proficiency among BPSOs in executing their roles, with noteworthy strengths in crime prevention, coordination with local authorities, and the execution of roving patrols. Table 1 provides an overview of the distribution of respondents across different barangays in the study, revealing variations in both population and the number of tanods (barangay peacekeeping officers) among these areas. Notably, Basak, Gun-ob, and Pajo exceed the prescribed limit of 20 tanods per barangay, as outlined in Memorandum Circular No. 2003-42. The discrepancy in the

number of respondents further underscores challenges in achieving a comprehensive survey, with factors such as absence or night shift duties affecting the data collection process. The research instrument utilized in this study is a questionnaire divided into three sections. The first section delves into the personal profiles of respondents, encompassing age, gender, educational background, and length of service as barangay tanods. The second section gauges the level of awareness among barangay public safety officers. The third section comprises a twelve-item questionnaire focusing on tanods' duties and responsibilities, guided by DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2003-42. This circular, serving as a benchmark for professionalizing barangay tanods, is integral to assessing the awareness of Barangay Public Safety Officers. Respondents rated their awareness levels on a four-point scale: (4) Very Aware, (3) Aware, (2) Less Aware, and (1) Not Aware.

Table 2 provides a demographic snapshot, revealing that a substantial portion of survey participants falls within the 41-50 age range, indicative of a mature respondent group. The dominance of males and a majority having a high school education underscore the diverse composition of BPSOs. Such demographic information is crucial for understanding the context in which BPSOs operate and tailoring training programs to their specific needs. Moving to Table 3, a nuanced picture of BPSOs' awareness in patrolling duties emerges. While the respondents demonstrate a high level of awareness, there is room for improvement, particularly in reporting disturbances or untoward incidents. This finding suggests a need for targeted training to enhance BPSOs' preparedness in handling a diverse range of situations during patrols.

Table 4 sheds light on BPSOs' proficiency in information gathering and reporting. Notably, the highest mean is associated with promptly reporting incidents to concerned barangay officials or through the hotline 117. This suggests a commendable level of vigilance and responsiveness among BPSOs, fostering trust and confidence among residents. However, the data also highlights a potential area for improvement in assisting the dissemination of information regarding the Fire Code of the Philippines. This points to the importance of refining BPSOs' understanding of specific regulations and codes that contribute to public safety. Table 5 examines BPSOs' awareness in inspection duties, revealing strengths in assisting the PNP in inspecting vehicles during checkpoints. However, the lowest mean is associated with assisting in the implementation of the Fire Code of the Philippines. This underscores the importance of targeted training to enhance BPSOs' understanding and application of specific regulatory frameworks, ensuring a comprehensive approach to inspection duties.

The analysis of BPSOs' awareness in traffic control duties, as presented in Table 6, indicates a commendable overall understanding. Yet, the lowest mean is associated with assisting traffic enforcers in preserving accident scenes from onlookers. This specific area highlights the need for BPSOs to further develop their skills in managing and securing accident scenes during traffic control operations. Table 7 explores BPSOs' awareness in arrest and search duties, revealing a high level of proficiency in apprehending violators of barangay ordinances. However, the lowest mean, though still categorized as "very aware," pertains to conducting random searches of abandoned structures. This emphasizes the importance of

targeted training to enhance BPSOs' capabilities in this specific area. Finally, Table 8 delves into BPSOs' level of awareness in crime information drive and campaign. The highest mean is associated with coordinating closely with barangay officials and local authorities in the drive against all forms of crimes, reflecting a positive collaborative dynamic. The lowest mean, however, suggests a need for improvement in assisting the dissemination of information regarding the Fire Code of the Philippines. This underscores the importance of refining BPSOs' understanding and communication skills to effectively convey information related to public safety. In summary, while the overall findings indicate a commendable level of awareness and performance among BPSOs, there are specific areas that demand focused attention and improvement. Targeted training and refresher courses in areas such as preserving accident scenes, conducting random searches, and disseminating information about specific codes and regulations would contribute to a more comprehensive and effective execution of BPSOs' duties and responsibilities within the barangay community. This nuanced understanding of strengths and areas for improvement provides a foundation for strategic interventions aimed at elevating the overall proficiency of Barangay Public Safety Officers in ensuring the safety and security of their respective communities.

CONCLUSION

The comprehensive analysis of the data, as presented in the various tables, offers valuable insights into the awareness and performance of Barangay Public Safety Officers (BPSOs) in different duties and responsibilities. These findings present a nuanced understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement within the BPSO framework, contributing to informed conclusions about their preparedness and effectiveness in ensuring public safety within barangays. Table 1 serves as a foundational exploration of the distribution of respondents across various barangays, revealing significant disparities in both population and the number of tanods. The data indicates that Basak, Gun-ob, and Pajo have surpassed the prescribed limit of 20 tanods per barangay, as outlined in Memorandum Circular No. 2003-42. This discrepancy prompts an initial reflection on the adherence to regulatory standards within the barangay peacekeeping structure. The challenges in achieving a comprehensive survey of tanods, as evidenced by varying response rates due to absences or night shift duties, raise concerns about the completeness of the collected data. These challenges must be acknowledged in interpreting the findings and underscore the need for flexibility in data collection methods to account for the dynamic schedules of tanods. The research instrument, a questionnaire with three sections, unveils valuable information about the personal profiles, awareness levels, and duties and responsibilities of BPSOs.

The application of a four-point awareness scale, ranging from "Very Aware" to "Not Aware," provides a structured approach to gauging the level of understanding among respondents. The detailed analysis of awareness in specific duties and responsibilities, as illustrated in Tables 3 to 8, showcases commendable strengths and areas for improvement. BPSOs demonstrate notable proficiency in patrolling, information gathering, and coordination with local authorities. However, there are specific areas, such as preserving accident scenes during traffic control, conducting random searches, and disseminating information about the Fire Code of the

Philippines, where enhancement and targeted training are warranted. The awareness levels highlighted in Tables 3 to 8 not only indicate proficiency but also serve as a basis for strategic interventions. For instance, the high level of awareness in coordinating with local authorities against crimes (Table 8) underscores the potential for fostering stronger collaborations to enhance public safety initiatives. In conclusion, the study provides a comprehensive overview of BPSOs' awareness and performance, offering valuable insights into the dynamics of barangay peacekeeping structures. The findings underscore the need for continued adherence to regulatory standards, flexibility in data collection strategies, and targeted training programs to address specific areas of improvement. The commendable proficiency demonstrated by BPSOs in various duties lays a foundation for building on strengths and advancing the overall effectiveness of barangay public safety efforts. Moving forward, stakeholders can use these insights to refine policies, implement tailored training programs, and foster a more resilient and responsive barangay public safety framework that aligns with the evolving needs of the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the comprehensive analysis of the data and findings, several recommendations emerge to enhance the effectiveness of Barangay Public Safety Officers (BPSOs) and contribute to the overall improvement of public safety within barangays:

- Ensure strict adherence to regulatory standards, such as those outlined in Memorandum Circular No. 2003-42, which prescribes a maximum of 20 tanods per barangay. Local authorities should regularly review and align the number of tanods with these regulations to maintain an optimal and regulated structure.
- Develop and implement targeted training programs based on the specific areas identified for improvement. Training sessions should focus on enhancing skills related to preserving accident scenes, conducting random searches, and disseminating information about regulatory frameworks such as the Fire Code of the Philippines.
- Foster stronger collaborations between BPSOs and local authorities, as highlighted in the positive coordination observed in Table 8. Joint initiatives and regular communication channels between barangay officials, police, and BPSOs can enhance crime prevention efforts and overall public safety.
- Establish a system for continuous monitoring and evaluation of BPSOs' performance. Regular assessments can identify evolving challenges, assess the effectiveness of training programs, and provide valuable insights for ongoing improvement initiatives.
- Implement community engagement programs to raise awareness about the roles and responsibilities of BPSOs. Educate residents about the importance of adherence to public safety guidelines and encourage collaboration between BPSOs and the community to create a safer living environment.

- Provide training specifically focused on enhancing communication skills, especially in disseminating information about regulatory frameworks. Effective communication is crucial for ensuring that residents are well-informed about safety regulations and can contribute to community-wide compliance.

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