

The Challenges and Lived Experiences of the Barangay Tanods: A Phenomenological Qualitative Study in the Philippines During COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

Barangay tanods are not exempted from the risk of the COVID-19 due to being exposed to public areas. Aside from health risks, these front liners are also a mistreatment subject from violators. Thus, this study is conducted during the pandemic and gathered data through a phone interview. It is conducted to explore the lived experiences of Barangay Tanods and how they adjusted to the drastic change in the work environment, health risk exposure to COVID-19, and the threat of danger caused by different factors during community quarantine. It also determines the specific challenges in the work environment and the changes in policing strategies, and how they cope. Lastly, it aims to map out how these experiences and impacts will improve preparations and the development of policing strategies in future crises. Moreover, three major conclusions emerge from this study's findings: (1) Barangay tanods faced difficulties in the sudden shift of their work environment (2) Most of the barangay tanods received incentives from the government to supply their health and sanitary needs (3) Barangay tanods reflected on their experiences to further improve as public servants and to be prepared for future crisis.

Keywords: Barangay Tanod, COVID-19, Lived experiences, Health protocols

1. INTRODUCTION

Upon the Spaniards' arrival in the late 16th century, they discovered a well-organized settlement of native Filipinos called "barangays"—the name barangay derived from *balangay*, a Malay word "sailboat." Historically, the barangay is a relatively small community of around 50 to 100 families, each under a *Datu* leadership or a chieftain (Borlaza & Hernandez, 2021). The datu also serves as the Executive, Legislator, and Chief Justice of the community. It is also the commander in chief of the armed forces on the battlefield and enables treatise and truce in foreign affairs (Manarang, 2011).

The barangay villages consist of thirty to one hundred houses, and the population. Up to this day, the barangays still exist and are known as the Local Government's smallest unit. It serves as the primary implementing and planning unit of government projects, plans, programs, policies, and exercises in the community, and as a forum wherein the collective views of the people may be expressed, crystallized, and considered, and where disputes may be amicably settled (Local Government Code of the Philippines, 1991). It is led by the Punong Barangay,

which enforces all laws and ordinances; maintains public order; ensures the delivery of essential services; enforces laws and regulations relating to pollution control and protection of the environment; adopts measures to prevent and control the proliferation of squatters; and adopts measures to prevent and eradicate drug abuse, child abuse, and juvenile delinquency (Punongbayan, 2018). With the help of the Barangay Police or Barangay Tanod Brigade, which is considered one of the Barangay Peace and Order Committee (BPOC), they ensure peace and order prevail in the barangay (Panelo, 2013).

In December 2019, an unknown disease outbreak originated from Wuhan, China, resulted in a global pandemic that affected the entire world. Coronavirus (COVID-19) is known as an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus (World Health Organization, 2020). According to the WHO's dashboard, globally, as of 2:45 pm CEST, October 22, 2020, there have been 41,104,946 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 1,128,325 deaths (Khaliq, 2020). Since the first case of the virus last January 30, 2020, the Philippines' cases rapidly increased up to 391,809 affected, with over 7,461, as of November 6, 2020 (Worldometer, 2020). The country has now entered the list of top 20 countries with the most cases of COVID-19 (Madarang, 2020).

The widespread of COVID-19 exposed the various vulnerabilities inside our administrative response, healthcare system, and the country's overall preparedness for national emergencies. It also affected the number of our front-liners working non-stop since the first month of the national lockdown. In action to the call of President Rodrigo Duterte, the military and law enforcement officials, including the barangay tanod, are in charge to facilitate the community quarantine in different areas of the country and the strict implementation of wearing face masks and face shields, and social distancing in mitigating the risks and increasing cases of COVID-19 (Recuenco, 2020). Their duty also includes the inspection of quarantine passes, management of checkpoints, patrolling the curfew to observe the minimum health standards (Caliwan, 2020).

Barangay tanods are not exempted from the risk of the COVID-19 due to being exposed to public areas. Aside from health risks, these front liners are also a mistreatment subject from violators. As reported on the GMA network's official site, two barangay tanods were beaten up, receiving minor injuries from a quarantine violator and its family in Baliuag, Bulacan (Salazar, 2020). However, numerous articles also prove that most barangay tanods use excessive force, escalating to brutality, during the pandemic. These challenges of being a frontline also aggravate their financial needs, knowing that most Barangay workers are sub-minimum wage earners (Ismael, 2020).

This study is conducted during the pandemic and gathered data through a phone interview. It is conducted to explore the lived experiences of Barangay Tanods and how they adjusted to the drastic change in the work environment, health risk exposure to COVID-19, and the threat of danger caused by different factors during community quarantine. It also determines the specific challenges in the work environment and the changes in policing strategies, and how they cope. Lastly, this study is conducted to map out how these experiences and impacts will improve preparations and the development of policing strategies in future crises.

1.1 Research Questions

This study aims to explore the lived experiences of the Barangay Tanod during the pandemic, precisely the following questions:

1. What are the challenges in the work environment, and how they cope with them?

2. How do they determine the policing strategies' changes and how they adjusted to them?
3. How can these experiences and impacts inform the military enforcement in preparations and the development of strategies in the event of a future crisis?

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 *Barangay Police duties before and during Pandemic*

A peaceful and secure environment is critical to every society since it affects all aspects of economic and social development and is a necessary *sin-qua non* to realizing human rights (Kimanuka, 2019). Ensuring the peace and order within the community, the Barangay Tanod, formally known as Barangay Peacekeeping Security Officer or Barangay Police, plays an essential part in the progress and development of the barangay, as it is one of the mechanisms of the Barangay Peace and Order Committee (BPOC) (Municipality of Palompon, 2019). As stated in the Guidelines on professionalizing the Barangay Tanod (2003) provided by Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Barangay Police's duties and responsibilities include: Assisting barangay officials in the avoidance of crime and the promotion of public safety through conducting patrol/" Ronda," monitoring the presence of suspicious persons, criminals and other lawless elements through conducting surveillance on crime breeding areas, and reporting it to the concerned barangay officials or through Hotline "117"; cooperating with the police/local authorities in the drive against all forms of crimes and assisting "lupong tagapamayapa" in the execution of warrants and other judicial processes; and other means of maintaining peace and order within the barangay.

Gonzales et al. (2006) stated that during public health emergencies, law enforcement is responsible for present threats –whether human made (e.g., war or terrorist attacks) or naturally occurring (e.g., natural disasters or pandemics). They noted that policing strategies vary depending on the threat's cause and severity. Gonzales et al. also included that once an outbreak of disease becomes a serious threat to the public. The law enforcement's role may include enforcing public health orders (e.g., quarantines or travel restrictions), securing the perimeter of contaminated areas, securing health care facilities, crowd-control, and monitoring the suspected biological scenes, terrorism, and protecting national stockpiles of vaccines and medical necessities.

With that being said, locally, Barangay is the first contact point of any citizen, taxpayers or not, to the government (Tiquia, 2020). By the time the Philippines' COVID-19 cases increased, President Duterte strictly implemented the wearing of face masks and observance of physical distancing. According to Recuenco (2020), Police Lt. Gen. Guillermo Lorenzo Eleazar, commander of the JTF COVID Shield, said that the police supervisor should team up with the barangay security officers or barangay tanod in enforcing the minimum health safety protocols and explaining the community level implementation of quarantine rules to control the spread of COVID-19. Since the controlling variable to COVID-19 is population density, the barangay should be in charge of identifying, contact-tracing and investigating the affected families (Tiquia, 2020). Eleazar also stated that the barangays play a vital role in the fight against COVID-19 because once the quarantine restrictions were eased in almost all parts of the country, residents became complacent on the health safety protocols. Physical distancing was neglected by converging again for drinking sessions and gossiping (Recuenco, 2020).

2.2 *Challenges during Pandemic*

In an address to the country, President Duterte said the national government needs the cooperation of the LGUs amid the current crisis inquiring them to follow government-set measures to anticipate public disorder and confusion. As the cases among the policing force pose a challenge in an increase of infected cops, along with the meeting with the officials of the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF), President Duterte also calls for concerted endeavors against Coronavirus (Presidential Communications Operations Office, 2020). The expanding number of the Cebu City Police Office's police force, who have tested positive for Coronavirus (COVID-19) and those experiencing isolation, poses a challenge within the enhanced community quarantine's authorization. Cebu City Police Office has 1,040 staff. A total number of 28 have tested positive for the virus, counting at slightest two who died. Currently, 196 police officers in Cebu City are undergoing isolation (Gonzales, 2020). The problem is, it will cause the policing force to decrease in human resources due to the 14 days self-quarantine.

Senator Sherwin Gatchalian stressed the need to empower barangay officials to respond to all types of disasters, especially situations similar to COVID-19, since they are more familiar with the localities (Torregoza, 2020). Torregoza stated in her article that Gatchalian needed the barangay police to be enabled and informed, making sure that they know what to do and not just given hazard pay or the usual salary. Other than monitoring the community and ensuring that health protocols are being followed, the Philippine National Police (PNP) plans to deploy at least two police officers in every barangay across the country to eliminate criminal elements and insurgence in the presence of the police (Recuenco, 2020). Recuenco also stated in his article that to maintain peace and order, PNP Chief Gen. Camilo Cascolan said that the policemen would reinforce the barangay security officers, also known as barangay tanods, ensuring that every barangay will be shielded from the influence of the communist rebels. However, the program did not go as planned, stated in the article, due to a lack of police personnel that will guarantee peace and order in more than 42 000 barangays across the country, some of which are areas where communist rebels inhabit.

The bravery possessed by the front liners is not just for fighting the virus but also sacrificing the moment to be with their families in these trying times. Aside from the importance of equipping the barangay police in this Pandemic, Senator Sherwin Gatchalian also stated the importance of protecting their families exposed when exposed (Torregoza, 2020).

As the Philippines experiences a new set of quarantine conventions for the first half of August 2020, 60 medical affiliations have inquired for a time-out and looked for the national government to return the Philippine capital, Metro Manila a stricter enhanced community quarantine. For two main reasons. First, the country's National Capital region's health care system has reached its critical level and is overwhelmed due to the unforeseen rapid increase of cases. Secondly, the healthcare force is experiencing depression and fatigue; aside from the fact that the healthcare facilities are full, one also the reason is to choose who will live and die (Biana & Joaquin, 2020). To assist moderate the spread of the coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) in communities, the Quezon City government has released guidelines for barangays on how to set up and work their quarantine facilities appropriately. In the memorandum released by Mayor Belmonte, she points out the importance of barangay-based isolation facilities fighting against the Coronavirus. Also, quarantine facilities in barangay will help free up hospital beds for severe, critical, or moderate cases. The barangays can also facilitate confirmed cases that are previously discovered in their respective homes. Besides, the facility must have access to the Barangay Health Emergency Response Team (BHERT) and other government and health specialists

capable of observing patients conceded into the facility. It moreover must be inside a maximum of two hours travel to a hospital (Philippine News Agency, 2020).

The rapid increase of the Coronavirus is seen as fatal as the country struggles to handle its total that jumped to more than one hundred thousand cases. The Philippines recorded 5,032 different contaminations on the first week of August, the country's most significant single-day increase, taking its total affirmed coronavirus cases to 103,185. The death toll hopped by 20 to 2,059. The second most elevated number of COVID-19 contaminations and deaths in Southeast Asia is behind Indonesia (Dela Cruz, 2020). In line with the policing force, the total number of police officers who contracted the Coronavirus reported the total number of 1 564, with 1 604 suspected cases in and 723 probable cases (Caliwan, 2020).

It is undeniable that one of the foes that we are battling right now, aside from the Covid - 19, is each family's financial health in the country. Specifically, one of the problems faces by our barangay tanod is their work compensation as a frontline in battling the worst health crisis of this generation. A party-list lawmaker, Herrera prior recorded House Bill (HB) 5846 proposing to extend the honorarium and Christmas incentives of barangay officials, counting barangay tanod and individuals of Lupong Tagapamayapa (pacification committee) by amending a provision within the 29-year-old Local Government Code (LGC). In line with this, he proposes that the barangay tanod will receive monthly compensation of P5,000 thousand plus a P3,000 Christmas bonus (Cruz, 2020). Also, Senator "Bong" Go requested to national government agencies and local government units (LGUs) to incorporate barangay tanod into the government's social amelioration program (SAP) after the Department of Social Welfare and Advancement (DSWD) regarded them as qualified for such benefits (Ismael, 2020).

On April 1, 2020, in a broadcast address, President Duterte advised those who may cause 'trouble' amid the community quarantine's inconvenience during the COVID 19 pandemic. Referring to the political left, but moreover apparently others who may protest or address government measures, he transparently gave orders to the police, military, and local authorities to shoot them dead, saying, "I will not hesitate." The order of President Duterte is apparent when the lives of the policing force, including the barangay tanod, are in the line, protect themselves. Based on most recent data from the Philippine National Police, over 17,000 individuals have been captured for violations related to lockdown and curfew orders declared in different locales within the nation, including Metro Manila, in response to the Pandemic. Moreover, reports have shown up of cruel disciplines those breaching quarantines have been made to endure, counting sitting for hours within the hot sun or being confined in dog cages (Amnesty International, 2020). While on the part, the two barangay tanod in Bulacan were beaten up by a quarantine violator and his family. The said barangay tanod sustained various minor injuries on the body and lost a tooth (Salazar, 2020). On April 3, 2020, a barangay watchman was shot by a violator in Sitio Latasan, Barangay Labogon, Mandaue City for calling out its group during their drinking session outside their homes (Sunstar, 2020). The news article stated that while the barangay were roving in their area, Sosimo Callora, the victim, spotted Arnel "Boyot" Caro with his friends. Callora called out the group for violating the protocols of the ECQ as they were outside their homes drinking, but as Callora was about to leave, he was shot by Caro. The barangay tanod maintained discharge wounds on his cleared out bear and chest.. However, several cases about law enforcement abusing their authorities were spread in different outlets of media. ON April 28, 2020, a Quezon City gov't personnel was video-recorded beating a man for an alleged quarantine violation (Sampayan, 2020). As stated in the article that while the victim was held in both his hands and feet, the enforcers carry the whimpering man like a sack, hoisting him into their van.

The Quezon City Government already released their statement and is now investigating the incident.

2.3 Police Plan Response in Battling COVID-19

Police forces worldwide are facing new challenges due to the outbreak of COVID-19, a virus that originated in Wuhan, China (Andersen et al., 2020). Police officers and law enforcement are expected to fulfill their duty in a new environment but with an indefinite strategy on hand.

Due to the lack of preparedness when the virus spread across the globe, consumers began hoarding food and medical supply that also escalated into violence due to the scarcity of needs (Dudley, 2020). Countries in South East Asia, such as the Philippines and Indonesia, have limited the number of necessities for every consumer (Neo, 2020). It is undeniable that the health workers are the vanguard in this battle, and the police should be one in this battle and must respond and must remain as the keeper of peace and order inside the community. They are expected to carry responsibilities such as: enforcing public health orders, and it includes travel restrictions and quarantine, securing health care facilities, controlling the crowds. In nutshell, police planning in response to COVID-19 is essential to mention all the issues regarding the preparedness and the call for the recovery from this Pandemic. It would also highlight the police's importance in response during the Pandemic, and it would create a noticeable impact on the future relationship between the police force and, of course, to the people (Police Division United Nations Department of Peace Operations, 2020).

To create a concrete plan for this Pandemic, the police force must have thorough knowledge about this Pandemic threats. It is imperative to equip all those police forces responsible for planning and battling with this (PDUNDPO, 2020). Policemen cannot just help maintain peace and order in society but also help in battling misinformation about COVID-19. Empowering the police force about the virus's threats can help them have critical thinking in analyzing between a fact and opinion. It would help them analyze the laws and policies comprehensively, they could also recognize what information should be shared and understand what drives misinformation (Hollywood et al., 2020).

To be more effective in enforcing law and order during the Pandemic, Kenya's National Police Service launched their first-ever online training in equipping the police force with adequate knowledge of the COVID-19. The training collaborates between Kenya and the European Union and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) that comprises seven learning modules for the policemen. In the face of these new challenges, Kenya's policing force also came up with new strategies that could lessen the hate crimes and the empowerment of enforcing COVID-19 related regulations (United Nation, 2020).

Furthermore, here in the Philippines, the collaboration of the Department of Health (DOH) and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund Philippines (UNICEF) made it possible to train 2,500 allied health force in battling the spreading of the COVID-19, including the policing force such as quarantine officers in points of entry, border patrol unit, military, police and the barangay members of a COVID-19 task force including the barangay tanods (UNICEF, 2020).

Planning in battling the Pandemic can be quite similar to planning to battle other incidents. However, there must be a specific component that must be highlighted in the plan. Due to the rapid increase of the Philippines' COVID-19 cases, the government adopts or uses the "Drug War" strategy to lessen the reported case. Simultaneously, they were sending police teams

in a house-to-house search for possible infected people in the area. They will go to specific areas and check for the citizens if they pose any symptoms of the COVID-19 and regulate and inspect the imposed lockdowns in the area (Robertson, 2020).

According to the systematic review done by Laufs and Waseem (2020), the best policing and practices to be done during this COVID-19 lies in the review and academic analysis of disaster management practice and policies. Focusing on health emergencies cannot be practical enough because a small amount of knowledge is known about the virus; therefore, coming up and reviewing the suggested method could impact policing whether in the short-term or long-term.

Reicher and Stott (2020) consider the COVID-19 impact as a joint disorder (riot) explained by three outlines. First, the incidents that lead to joint disorder. Second, the police response to COVID-19, and lastly, by applying the said understanding to specific scenarios. Yang and Stewart (2019) say that studies of police use of social media platforms such as Twitter can communicate publicly, as suggested by the Houston Police Department in the face of hurricanes. This suggests that various social media sites can help disseminate information to people, and it could be more efficient for authorized personnel such as our policemen to utilize in this Pandemic.

COVID-19 planning must involve a multi-agency and multi-disciplinary effort. It is not just to protect the peace and order but also to protect them from the threat of the virus. To protect the policing force from exposure to the virus, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2020) suggests maintaining 6 feet of distance to others, proper practice of hand hygiene, avoiding touching your face with hands, and wearing protective gear is also a must. They also mentioned the recommended personal protective equipment (PPE), and it includes disposable examination gloves, single-use isolation gown, facemask (-95 or higher-level respirator), and the protection of the eye such as disposable face shield or goggles.

According to the published news report in Inquirer.net (Lalu, 2020), as of July 20, 2020, the cases of COVID-19 in the policing force reached 1 564. This accumulated number is traced with The Department of Health (DOH) and is alarming. In line with the eagerness to support the policing force, strengthen it and avoid as much as possible infected personnel due to the inadequate number of the police force, The Philippine National Police (2020) adopts the biosafety measures in battling COVID-19 to prevent contamination of it among our policing force especially the person in charge in the field such as patrolling in curfew, quarantine control points. The PNP Health Service, entitled PNP-wide Biosafety Plan, includes the proper setting up of decontamination procedure when returning to their respective homes or stations from their duty. Hence, as of November 10, 2020, the PNP COVID-19 CASES UPDATE (2020) released the total number of cases of 7,541. With a total number of 430 active cases and with a total number of 7,087 recoveries from the virus. These data support the effectiveness of the plotted strategies in battling COVID-19 by the policing force and manifest the beneficial cooperation of the police force to our medical team.

To deliver a peaceful relationship with the residents of the policing force, the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres (2020) has said, "Mutual respect and upholding human rights must be our compass in navigating this crisis." This emphasizes the policing force's knowledge when it comes to enforcing health orders to respective quarantine areas. It also identifies the quarantine enforcer's ability, such as police, barangay tanod to identify relevant regulations and laws in responding to COVID-19.

On page 7 of (PDUNDPO, 2020), numbers 19 and 20 states that responding to COVID-19 should be proportionate and non-discriminatory. Meaning, the national police and allied law enforcement office will continuously address those related to public health concerns before, during, and after the Pandemic. The police force must expect numerous foes in responding to COVID-19, such as domestic violence, hate crime, violence, and prejudice against suspected COVID-19, food outlets, and distribution centers.

The chief of the Joint Task Force (JTF) COVID Shield requested barangay tanods in implementing health protocols to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Just as the barangay tanods will do patrols to prevent crime, and at the same time, they can also help to implement health protocols to prevent the spreading of COVID-19. As Police Lt. Gen. Guillermo Eleazar has said, the commander of JTF COVID Shield, barangay tanod, will make a significant contribution for the reason that there are not enough police officers to patrol in every alley in the country (Cayabyab, 2020).

3. METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative approach, and the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was utilized. This is an approach to qualitative idiographic psychological analysis that endeavors to supply information into how a qualitative approach point to supply point by point examinations of individual lived experience.

According to Alase (2017), IPA gives researchers the leading opportunity to understand the most profound deliberation of research participants' 'lived experiences. As an approach that's 'participant-oriented,' the interpretative phenomenological analysis approach permits the interviewees (research participants) to specific themselves and they are 'lived experience' stories the way they see fit without any twisting and prosecution. In this manner, utilizing the IPA approach in a qualitative research study repeats that its primary objective and essence are to investigate the 'lived experiences' of the research participants and permit them to narrate the research findings through their 'lived experiences.'

The method is phenomenological as it requires an intensive analysis of the participant; it points to examine individual knowledge and concerns an individual's interpretation or description of an object or event instead of an effort to form a practical explanation of the thing or occasion itself.

3.1 Participants

In obtaining the representative sample from the given population, the researchers used a purposive sampling technique. The participants were selected based on 2 criteria. The first requirement is that the participant must be a barangay tanod regardless of gender. Nevertheless, all of the participants in the sample are male. The second criterion is that the participant must be actively working during the pandemic. Age requirements were not included in this study to avoid limiting the participants to participate in the study.

The proposed number of participants in this research was 10. The researchers used phone interviews to ensure safety and rely only on contact information; the participants' availability limited the proposed number.

3.2 Instrument

The researchers conducted a semi-structured interview comprising 14 questions to incite the participants' views and experiences on their lived experiences as barangay tanod in this

pandemic. A semi-structured interview was utilized to extend and explore deeper into the participants' responses. The questions were inquired by using the Filipino dialect to supply a comfortable environment and encourage more in-depth data from the respondents.

The first part of the interview concentrated on participants' experiences before their work before the pandemic, as well as their initial response in regards to the barangay tanod as one of the frontlines. The second part consisted of questions regarding their work's significant experiences as barangay tanod during the pandemic. The third part section focused on the challenges they encounter during work hours. Lastly, the fourth part included questions regarding changing strategies and roles in their work as barangay tanod.

3.3 Procedures

This study is focused on the lived experiences of the barangay tanods during the pandemic. The sample consisted of barangay tanods actively participating, not limiting their age groups. The sample was gathered from Bulacan and Metro Manila.

Participants who were referred to the researchers were reached through phone calls or messages and inquired for their consent to be a portion of the study. Upon obtaining the consent, the schedule for interviews was talked about. Participants were briefed and given composed consent forms through text message or a direct message through an online platform upon the scheduled interviews. They were once more reminded of their right to pull back within the study and the limits of confidentiality.

This was taken after by the method of "pakikipagkwentuhan," where the researchers and the participants' compatibility building was started. Once the introduction, consolation, and trust have been set up, the interview proper was set off. Only one interview session was conducted with all participants who kept going for an average of 20 to 35 minutes. All the interviews were audio-recorded to help the researchers in transcribing the interview sessions

4. RESULTS

The summary of the participants' demographic characteristics in the study is shown in Table 1. The study was completed by ten barangay tanod residing in Metro Manila and Bulacan. The participant's ages ranged from 38 to 55 years old. For the sample's educational background, all of the participants were not able to finish a college degree. All of them are high school graduates. All of the participants are currently working as barangay tanod. Regarding their salary as barangay tanod, four received compensation of P4 000, while six received from a range of P2, 000 – P3, 500.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

VARIABLE	FREQUENCY
Age	
30-40 years old	4
41-50 years old	5
51-60 years old	1
Location	
Metro Manila	1
Bulacan	9
Highest Educational Attainment	
Elementary	0

High School	9
College Undergraduate	1
Employment	
Unemployed	0
Employed	10
Compensation	
2, 000 – 2, 500	4
2, 600 – 3, 000	1
3, 100 – 3, 500	3
4, 000 – 4, 500	2

The following sections summarize the results gathered from the in-depth interviews. The findings of this study are laid out in themes found inside each participant's interview. These findings are organized into three separate sections that cover the diverse viewpoints of the lived experiences of the barangay tanod; namely, 1) work function before the pandemic; 2) during the pandemic; 3) positive experiences and challenges in the policing strategies. Each area is further gathered into themes determined by the participants' responses. Subordinate themes of each superordinate theme are recorded with their frequencies, in descending arrange of prevalence. Besides, direct quotations are given from various participants to discuss each theme.

4.1 Work Function of Barangay Tanod Before the pandemic

All participants shared that their role as a barangay tanod before the Pandemic revolves around assisting the government in maintaining order and peace inside the community. According to such obligation, they conduct *rondas* or daily and night patrols, essentially exposing their lives and appendages to peril within the hands of criminal elements and other wayward individuals of society. As shown in table 2, there are few themes under the work functions of barangay tanod before the Pandemic from the participant's responses. The variables identified from the data include Day and night patrols, cleaning and maintenance of the barangay, and traffic enforcer.

Table 2. The work function of the barangay tanod during the pandemic

Work Function	Frequency
Day and night patrols	7
Cleaning and maintenance of the barangay	1
Traffic enforcer	2

4.1.1 Day and Night Patrols

For the participants, the majority of them reported that their duty before the Pandemic happened was Day and night patrol in their barangay. Jun shared:

“Ang trabaho na ginagawa ko noong wala pang COVID-19 eh ‘yung pag ro-ronda sa gabi. Noong wala pang pandemya ay isa lang ang iniisip naming na makikita naming ano, problema. Yung mga magnanakaw na mahuhuli, ‘yung mga kabataan na nagkakalat sa lansangan. Eh ngayon, iba na. Kasi kailangan ang doble ingat, gawa nga ng COVID-19. “

4.1.2 Cleaning and maintenance of the barangay

One of the participants reported that his duty before the Pandemic occurred was maintaining the barangay's cleanliness. Rolando stated that:

“Ang ginagawa ko noong wala pang COVID-19 ay tagapaglinis sa barangay. Tapos bukod dito, tagapagbantay din ako sa barangay. Minsan, kapag ka maluwa ang oras sumasama tayo sa mga ka-barangay natin na kailangan ng assistant dahil may gulo sila na dinulog sa ating kapitan. “

4.1.3 Traffic Enforcer

Two participants reported that their duty before the Pandemic was traffic enforcing. Crisostomo shared:

“Ang trabaho ko noon ay sa pag-aayos ng traffic. Kasi sa may bandang riles, duon medyo traffic gawa na ginagawa ang riles duon. Minsan naman ume-escort sa patay kapag libing, ayon, inaayos din ang traffic. Tapos duty din sa gabi, kada limang araw. “

Under the theme of the work function of the barangay tanod before the Pandemic include the reasons why they accepted their work as one of the vital front-liners that would help eradicate or slower the rapid increase of the virus across the country. As shown in table 3, there is one theme under the reasons why they accepted the work as barangay tanod, knowing the dangerous effect on themselves and their family. The variable identified from the data: call of duty.

Table 3. Reason of the barangay tanod in accepting their role in Pandemic

Reason	Frequency
Call of duty	10

All participants expressed profound feelings of satisfaction and fulfillment for accepting their work or role in this Pandemic. They expressed that rendering their service in this time of trouble, in this time of health crisis and the, policing force shortage, makes them feel they complete their roles as barangay tanod. This can be seen transparently on account of Ronaldo as he stated:

“Una, ‘yung panawagan ni Pangulong Duterte na kasama nga ang mga barangay tanod, eh kasama kami sa LGU, under kami ng DILG ang mga tanod, kaya bago kami isabak dun sa pagdating sa frontliner pinatawag muna kami ng kapitan para magkaroon ng konting seminar sa pangunguna ng isang captain na sundalo. Binigyan kami ng mga dapat gawin para kapag nilabas na kami alam na namin ang aming gagawin. Pangalawa, nag-isip talaga ako kasi sa pamilya alam ko para din sa kanila na makatugon dito sa, para din makatulong at makapagbigay kaalaman bilang isang barangay tanod. “

Of the 10 participants, four shared that witnessing their work efficacy gives them a sense of fulfillment as it empowers them to work hard and render more effort until this Pandemic ends. To Joel, to see his ka-barangay following and abiding by the health protocols made him even more excited to work despite the perilous of COVID-19.

“Noong una syempre natakot kasi lahat pwedi magkaroon ng COVID-19, napag-usapan pa nga namin ‘yan at syempre automatic yan na mas lalawak ang sakop ng aming trabaho. Malaking nakaimpluwensiya sa akin ay ang mga napapanuod ko sa balita na mabilis na

pagpasok niyan at makahawa sa atin. Noong una tutol pamilya ko, kaso wala sila magagawa kasi nakapaglista na ako, ganyan talaga tawag ng tungkulin 'yan, sa maliit man lang na trabaho naming makatulong ba. Tyaka 'yung makita mo 'yung mga tao na sumunod kahit papaano nakakatuwa, kasi may dulot kami. 'Yun din ang nagbibigay ng gana na pumasok pa sa trabaho.

4.2 Work Function of the Barangay Tanod during the pandemic

All of the participants shared that their role as a barangay tanod during the Pandemic also revolves around assisting the government in maintaining order and peace inside the community. The additional workload added to their work is guarding the checkpoint area, checking the people if they are abiding by the health protocols, and an additional two days of work. Under this theme includes their positive experiences during work hours, incentive receives from the government, such as the Social Amelioration Program (SAP), and the adequacy of personal protective equipment (PPE).

As shown in table 4, there are few themes under the work functions of barangay tanod during the Pandemic from the participant's responses. The variables identified from the data include Day and night patrols, cleaning and maintenance of the barangay, and traffic enforcer.

Table 4: The work function of the Barangay Tanod during the pandemic

Work Function	Frequency
Day and night patrols	10
Checkpoint area	10
Cleaning and maintenance of the barangay	1
Traffic enforcer	2
Enforcing health protocols	10

4.2.1 Day and night patrols

For the participants, all of them reported that one of their duty during the Pandemic was Day and night patrol in their barangay. Jun shared:

“Kagaya nga ng sinabi ko kanina, isa din ito sa mga trabaho naming ngayong may COVID-19 na. Ang pinagkaiba siguro noong wala pa ngayon ay mas mahigpit. Dahil sa sakit na 'yan mas na doble ang pag ro-ronda natin, dahil bawal talaga lumabas. Ang pinagkaiba lang eh, kung noon nakaka-ronda ng walang pangamba na magkasakit ka, ngayon hindi mo alam. Kaya sobrang pag-iingat at hindi talaga nawawala 'yan para paalalahanan na din at masabihan ang ating mga ka-barangay. “

4.2.2 Checkpoint area

All of the participants reported that one of his duty during the Pandemic occurred was guarding the checkpoint. Freddie stated that:

“Kasama sa trabaho ko 'yung magbantay sa mga checkpoint. Sinisigurado po naming na nasusunod talaga ang health protocol ng ating gobyerno. Lalo na sa mga motorista natin, sinasabihan natin sila na kung hindi naman masyado mahalaga at kaya naman na sa bahay na

lang, huwag ng lalabas. Kung may bibilhin siguraduhin na nabili na lahat, para hindi palabas labas. “

4.2.3 Cleaning and maintenance of the barangay

One of the participants reported that one of his duties during the Pandemic was maintaining the barangay's cleanliness. Rolando stated that:

“Ang ginagawa ko noong wala pang COVID-19 ay tagapaglinis sa barangay at ngayon din, ‘yan ay isa pa din sa trabaho ko. Ngayong pandemic mas kailangan ng malinis na lugar, lalo na ang bagarangay kasi madaming tao ang pumupunta dito“.

4.2.4 Traffic enforcer

Two of the participants reported that one of his duty during the Pandemic is traffic enforcement. Jun said that:

“Ako ang isa sa duty ko noong kasagsagan na napakahigpit dahil sa COVID-19 ay sa checkpoint talaga ako, pero noong bumalik na sa GCQ (general community quarantine), nabalik ako sa traffic enforcer isa sa duty. Kasi madaming saksakyan kailangan ayusin ang traffic. “

4.2.5 Enforcing health protocols

All of the participants reported that one of his duties during the Pandemic was enforcing health protocols. Ronaldo stated that:

“Ayun, totoo. Nahirapan talaga kami, kasi kumbaga naging semi-frontliner kami gaya ng mga pulis, mga doctor. Malaking hamon talaga ito, kaya hindi namin tinitigil ‘yung panawagan na mag-ingat. Kasi sa Valenzuela, medyo mahigpit ang aming LGU dito, kaya ayun ang aming pinatutupad, ‘yung safety measure talaga. “

4.3 Positive experiences during work hours

As shown in table 5, there are two themes under the positive experiences of barangay tanod during the Pandemic from the participant's responses. The variables identified from the data include positive experiences from the people and positive experiences from co-barangay tanod.

Table 5. Positive experiences of the barangay tanod during the Pandemic

Positive experiences during work hours	Frequency
Positive experiences from people	10
Positive experiences co-barangay tanod	10

All participants express optimism and happiness towards their work as barangay tanod. All of them have shown a profound sense of fulfillment for the positive experiences they received from the people and co-barangay tanod. They expressed that seeing people who follow their advice to health protocol of the government and always wear their face mask makes them feel successful in doing their work as barangay tanod and categorized as their positive experiences. This can be reflected in the account of Freddie.

“Yung pag-iikot naming ang maganda. Kasi kahit na hindi maiiwasan na magkainitan kayo ng sinasaway mo. Nakakatuwa pa din na mas madami ang sumusunod. Mayroon nga

minsang na may madidinig ka sa mga tao na pagkatapos mo sabihan na mag suot ng face mask ay papasalamatan ka at sasabihan ka ng simpleng “thank you”, ay nakakatuwa na. “

Fernan shared the same sentiments and said,

“Isa sa mga magandang karanasan ko nito na may pandemic eh, ‘yung respeto na binibigay ng mga ka-barangay natin. Kasi sa kabila na mayroon na mga nababalita sa T.V na may mga tanod na nabubugbog dahil sa mga violators eh, dito sa atin nakakatuwa na may respeto sila samin. Isa pa, kapag nagpapamigay ng ayuda, nakakagaan ng loob kasi nakikita mo ‘yung ngiti sa mga tao. “

4.3.1 Incentive receives from the government.

As shown in table 6, there are two themes under the incentives receives from the government of barangay tanod during the Pandemic from the participant's responses. The data variables were identified from the Social Amelioration Program (SAP) and hazard pay.

Table 6. Incentives receive from the government of the barangay tanod during the Pandemic

Positive experiences during work hours	Frequency
Social Amelioration Program (SAP)	2
Hazard pays	10

All of the participants express happiness towards their hazard pay. All of them have shown a profound sense of happiness and relief. This can be reflected in the account of Ronaldo.

“Tayo po ay hindi nakakuha ng SAP gawa na ang akin pong kabiyak ay teacher. Ngunit tayo po ay nakakatanggap ng hazard pay. “

According to Rolando, of the ten participants, two of them said that they received SAP from the government.

“Opo. Tayo po ay nakatanggap ng SAP galing sa ating gobyerno. “

4.3.2 Adequacy of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

As shown in table 7, there is only one theme under the adequacy of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) from the government of barangay tanod during the Pandemic from the participant's responses. All of the participants said that they are supplied with complete equipment. The variable identified from the data include: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Table 7. Adequacy Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) of the barangay tanod during the Pandemic

Positive experiences during work hours	Frequency
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	10

According to all the participants, another positive aspect of being a barangay tanod during the Pandemic is that the government is fully supporting them. In terms of their health and the personal protective equipment that they are using, it is vital in their work.

To Ramon said.

“Sapat ang ating mga kagamitan. Ang ating PPE kumpleto. Mayroon tayong alcohol, face shield, gloves, tyaka face mask. Mayroon din tayong vitamins na binibigay ng barangay sa amin. Bago din kami mag duty, sinisigurado din na maayos kami. Kinukuhanan kami ng temperature at blood pressure para masigurado na makakapag lingkod tayo. “

4.4 Challenges in the change of policing strategies

All of the participants shared that working as a barangay tanod in this time of Pandemic gives them various challenges in policing. The drastic change in their work environment and the challenge of doing their duty in the face of the COVID-19 makes it even harder for them to do their part as a barangay tanod effectively. Under this theme includes the differences of their work function before and during this Pandemic and how they cope with it, how these challenges help them to grow as an individual tanod in terms of their work function, and lastly if ever there is a reoccurrence of such this Pandemic, how their experiences will help them to be an effective tanod.

As shown in Table 8, the ten participants shared all their sentiments with one common denominator from their experiences in facing the pandemic. The participants actively engaged and answered how they adjusted to the work environment and how they successfully suited their role. The variable identified from the data includes: adjusting to the work environment and policing strategy.

Table 8. Challenges to the work environment and policing strategy of barangay tanod

Challenges	Frequency
Adjusting to work environment and policing strategy	10
Grow from the challenges in work environment	10
Effectiveness of barangay tanod in the face of reoccurrence of pandemic	10

According to the ten participants, they all discuss the difficulties and risks that their work as a barangay tanod had brought them. All of the participants expressed their fear of getting infected by the COVID-19 and highlighted their feeling of exhaustion from their job function. All of them also said that despite these exhausting variables, all of them chose to find ways that would help them to perform well and effectively in their work. As Joel describes in perfect in detail,

“Malaki ang pagkakaiba noong wala pa, ang pinagkaiba lang siguro ngayon ‘yung COVID-19 at ‘yung makukulit na ayaw sumunod sa protocols. Noong una, nanibago sa trabaho, kasi bukod sa sakit na ang kalaban natin eh, kasama din dyan ‘yung makukulit na ka-baranagay natin. Nakakapagod, kasi nadagdagan din tayo ng araw ng duty eh. Pero wala tayo choice kung hindi tulungan ang aming sarili sa trabaho. Sa maliit man lang na paraan nag anito, makatulong tayo. “

Joseph shared the same sentiments and said,

“Wala naman. Ang pinagkaiba lang ang mga tao ngayon maiinitin ang ulo, lahat pinepersonal. Gampanan mo ng maayos trabaho mo may masasabi, hindi mo gawin ng maayos may masasabi pa din. Pero gawa ng kulang talaga sa mga tao na magbabantay sa mga pasaway, eh patuloy pa na tumataas ang cases sa atin, kaya ayun, hindi ko na lang pinapansin. Basta ako, ginagawa ko na lang ang trabaho ko. “

4.4.1 How the challenges help them to grow in their work

As shown in table 8, all of the participants proudly expressed that they grow from the challenges they encountered in their work. Although some of their experiences gave them the opportunity for negative emotions, it could also provide positive emotional opportunities. According to the ten participants, being a barangay tanod is difficult and tiring because of all the obligations associated with their work. Feelings of fear in the face of COVID-19 and the drastic changes in their work function involved in them allowed them to look for the brighter side of the situation and chose to grow as an individual member of the society and to grow in their work as an effective enforcer of law in public health emergencies. Fernan is one of the participants who shared his experience:

“Oo. Malaki ang naitulong ng sitwasyon natin ngayon sa akin. Kasi sa araw-araw na may makakasalamuha ka na maiinit ang ulo, ‘yung paninita mo sa mga pasaway na ka-barangay natin na ayaw mag suot ng face mask. Sa aking pananaw ay natulungan ako noon na mas maging pasensyado. Sa trabaho naman, mas nagagawa ko na ;yung mas maayos na makipag-usap sa mga tao. Dati naman maayos na, pero iba ‘yung ngayon. Masasabi ko na mas mabilis nakikinig ang mga ka-barangay natin. “

4.4.2 Effectiveness of barangay tanod in the face of reoccurrence of Pandemic

As shown in table 8, all of the participants reported that their experiences would help them to be a more effective enforcer of law in public health emergencies such this in the face of reoccurrence of the pandemic. Their experiences now serve as the bond that holds their answer that they can be an efficient variable if ever such pandemic arises in future events. As Ronaldo describes in perfect detail,

“Sa tingin ko, oo. Ang city kasi ng Valenzuela, palaging I am ready. Kagaya nalang nitong may bagyo. Kaya noon bago dumating ang bagyo nakalikas na ang mga tao noon. Kaya alam ko na nakapaghanda na kami at handa dahil natuto na sa pandemiya. Kaya sa susunod mas maiiwasan na ang malaking pag-aalangan. “

5. DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the conclusions are derived from the findings of this study on the lived experiences of Barangay Tanods during the pandemic are describe. To further look into the subject, the general question was broken into three major topics: the challenges in the work environment, the changes in policing strategies, and the impact of their experiences in their preparation and development of the process in the event of a future crisis. The conclusions are based on the purpose, research questions, and results of the study and are further discussed and assessed.

In this chapter, the conclusions obtained from the findings of this study on the lived experiences of Barangay Tanods during the pandemic are described. To further look into the subject, the general question was broken into three major topics: the challenges in the work

environment; the changes in policing strategies'; and the impact of their experiences in their preparation and development of strategy in the event of a future crisis. The conclusions are based on purpose, research questions, and results of the study and will be discussed and assessed further.

It is evident that the entire world isn't ready for the occurrence of COVID-19. Sustaining the supplies for health and sanitation has become a challenge, especially for developing countries such as the Philippines. Health protocols to eradicate the risk of transmission, such as physical distancing, have become a struggle to be implemented properly. With the increase of the cases, front liners have been working multiple hours a day to do their duty. The participants expressed their worry and fear when they were assigned to be part of the front line by President Duterte (Tiquia, 2020). They stated that their families didn't agree at first, but they have no choice because it is part of their job. Despite their fear of contracting the virus, they accepted the responsibility, and they became part of the frontline.

The participants expressed their difficulty with the change on their usual tasks, or in some cases, gained additional duties. From doing day and night patrols to prevent crime, they are now doing it to observe curfews in every barangays. Morning sweepings are now changed to community disinfecting, and checkpoints for temperature checking have been added to the list of traffic enforcers. Together with the PNP, they made sure that health protocols were enforced in every barangay, and community level quarantines were observed to reduce the risk of spreading the virus (Recuenco, 2020).

On a positive note, the participants displayed optimism in the face of hardships. Small acts of kindness and gratitude from the people in the community make their duty a little less burdensome. One of the participants, Fernan, stated that seeing the people smile after receiving their food supply from the barangay makes his heart warm. With all their hard work, Senator Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go implored the inclusion of barangay tanods as part of Social Amelioration Program (SAP) beneficiaries last April 2020, which was granted in the same month it was requested (Ismael, 2020). President Duterte also approved a hazard pay grant to front-liners, which can be directly infected by patients, including barangay tanods (CNN Philippines, 2020). 2 of the participants received both incentives while the others only received SAP benefits. Aside from this, they also received adequate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) supplies from their barangay. Their health is also monitored by accepting free blood pressure testing and vitamins to make sure they are equipped to fulfill their duties.

The global pandemic is no stranger to humanity's history; however, it challenged our preparedness towards it. With the sudden change in policing strategies, the participants reflected on their duties as front lines and stated that it helped them grow public servants. They've realized that patience is essential as it was tested by the number of violators they have encountered on their duty. The pandemic made them efficient and ready if another national emergency arises in the future.

Altogether, each subtheme of this study showed a brief understanding of the lived experiences of the barangay tanods during the pandemic. There may be number of difficulties in adjusting to the new normal, but focusing on their primary function as a public servant makes them motivated to fulfill their duty responsibly.

6. CONCLUSION

Three major conclusions emerge from this study's findings: (1) Barangay tanods faced difficulties in the sudden shift of their work environment (2) Most of the barangay tanods

received incentives from the government to supply their health and sanitary needs (3) Barangay tanods reflected on their experiences to further improve as public servants and to be prepared for future crisis.

Furthermore, the study recommends that every front-line, either in the healthcare or the military sector, should receive adequate support and treatment from the government. They should be prioritized on the protective measures, and their needs should be acknowledged and heard. Society should understand that their role is crucial not only because it is their duty to eradicate the virus, but they sacrifice themselves to save other people's lives, and they do not deserve any discrimination, especially to their families. Thus, this research's findings can serve as the baseline for further studies regarding the front-liners and public servants, specifically the barangay tanod. Future studies may also provide in-depth investigations on each front-liners' lived experiences during the pandemic.

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