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EVALUATING CRIME SCENE PRESERVATION: COMPETENCY AND CHALLENGES OF BARANGAY FIRST RESPONDERS

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ABSTRACT

Crime scene preservation is crucial for maintaining the integrity of investigations, particularly at the barangay level, where initial response affects evidence management. This study evaluates the competency of Barangay Security Force (BSF) members in both crime scene preservation and first responder duties, and compares the challenges they face with those of the Philippine National Police (PNP), the main law enforcement agency. The research identifies training gaps, unclear job descriptions, and operational readiness concerns among barangay responders that may influence judicial outcomes and community safety.

The study used an explanatory mixed methods approach with a sequential design. First, the research gathered and analyzed quantitative data to assess competency levels. Then, qualitative analysis was used to interpret the statistical results.

The findings show that BSF members have low competency in crime scene preservation and first response tasks, mainly due to insufficient training, limited equipment, and unclear role definitions. In contrast, Philippine National Police (PNP) personnel show much higher proficiency, highlighting a performance gap between official and auxiliary responders. BSF members also face further challenges, such as a lack of standardized training, limited legal authority, inadequate resources, and operational constraints within barangays.

The study finds a gap in performance between BSF and PNP personnel. This creates risks for initial crime scene actions, especially with preserving evidence. Fixing these issues needs a structured program to improve BSF skills. The study proposes an Enhancement Program for BSF Competencies on Crime Scene Preservation as a focused solution for barangay units and agencies to adopt.

KEYWORDS: *Barangay Security Force (BSF), Philippine National Police (PNP), crime scene preservation, first responder competency, explanatory mixed methods*

INTRODUCTION

Preserving a crime scene is crucial for any investigation because it keeps evidence safe, well-documented, and usable in court. In the Philippines, this job often begins with the Barangay Security Force, also called Barangay Tanod or Barangay First Responder. They are usually the first to arrive, assessing the situation and protecting the area until police get there. Still, there are ongoing concerns about whether they have the right skills and training for this important task, which demands specific knowledge, discipline, and teamwork.

Internationally, first responders' ability to preserve crime scenes is critical to successful investigations. Many countries train local security personnel to protect evidence until forensic experts arrive. In the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia, standardized training emphasizes documentation, evidence handling, and coordination with investigators. These protocols recognize that the initial response is decisive in maintaining evidence integrity. Global experience demonstrates that well-prepared community responders significantly contribute to achieving justice.

In the Philippines, the barangay serves as the smallest political unit and the first line of public safety. Under Republic Act No. 7160, or the Local Government Code of 1991, barangays are mandated to organize their own peacekeeping team, the Barangay Security Force, to assist in enforcing local ordinances, maintaining order, and supporting higher law enforcement agencies. The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), through Memorandum Circular 2003-42, further defines its role in assisting police operations and responding to emergencies. Yet, unlike professional police organizations, most BSF members have limited access to formal training, forensic knowledge, and technical resources. Their participation in securing a crime scene is often guided by experience rather than standardized procedure, which may lead to unintentional contamination or loss of crucial evidence.

In busy cities like Taguig, BSFs deal with more challenges because of growing populations, crowded spaces, and social differences. They are often the first to reach crime scenes, and what they do right away affects the quality of evidence. If they lack clear instructions, enough training, or good teamwork with the police, their actions might accidentally harm investigations.

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This makes it important to look closely at their skills and what influences how well they do their job.

BSF members need to be skilled not just for their own work, but also to keep the justice system trustworthy. If crime scenes are not secured well or evidence is handled poorly, investigations can fail and people may lose trust in law enforcement. BSF members must understand security, ethics, fair procedures, and how to work with other agencies. Their work is the starting point for a solid, evidence-based investigation.

This study uses two main ideas: Organizational Culture Theory and the Competency-Based Framework. The first looks at how shared values and habits in the barangay affect how BSF members do their jobs, including the role of leadership and communication. The second focuses on the mix of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that help them work well. Together, these approaches help us understand both personal ability and the group culture that shape how BSFs handle crime scenes.

This research hopes to help improve how barangays and police work together when responding to crime scenes. The findings can guide leaders and agencies in creating better training and clear rules that fit the real situations BSFs face. Over time, the study aims to help set a standard for BSF skills that can be used in different communities, making their work more professional and effective.

In short, this study shows that BSF effectiveness in crime scene work is about more than just skills. It also depends on community trust, good local leadership, and a strong justice system. Building up BSF skills helps strengthen local law enforcement and makes sure justice starts right at the crime scene.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study examines the competency and challenges faced by the Barangay Security Force (BSF), also known as Barangay First Responders (BFRs), in crime scene preservation. The research is positioned within the broader context of community-based policing and the initial phases of forensic investigation. Over the past decade, scholarship has underscored the essential function of first responders in maintaining crime scene integrity and ensuring the admissibility of physical evidence in judicial proceedings. Forensic science has developed into a field that demands both scientific accuracy and procedural precision from initial responders. In developing countries such as the Philippines, non-police personnel frequently manage the early stages of investigation, presenting both opportunities and challenges for upholding investigative standards. Previous studies have demonstrated that errors in evidence handling at the scene can undermine subsequent forensic processes, highlighting the critical importance of first responder competency.

International research emphasizes the influence of forensic innovation and digital transformation on crime scene preservation. Recent studies have identified the increasing significance of digital forensics and early evidence documentation in investigative processes, while also noting a persistent training gap among community-level responders. Despite advancements in technology, human factors such as awareness, discipline, and adherence to procedure remain decisive in determining investigative outcomes. These observations are consistent with organizational culture theory, which posits that institutional values and behaviors directly impact performance, especially within law enforcement and emergency response contexts.

In the Philippines, local studies examine how Barangay-based staff handle early crime scenes. In the Philippine context, local research investigates the practices of Barangay-based personnel during the initial response to crime scenes. Findings indicate that BSF members are typically the first to arrive but often lack standardized training in evidence handling and scene protection. While local responders demonstrate motivation, they frequently lack essential procedural skills. Inconsistent coordination between the BSF and the Philippine National Police (PNP) has resulted in chain of custody errors and lost evidence. These issues point to a gap in the implementation of Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Memorandum Circular No. 2003-42, which mandates barangay officials to assist law enforcement, including in initial crime response. and Murphy et al. (2020) show that transparent and responsible community responders increase public confidence in local governance. However, if responders seem untrained or unreliable, the community's sense of security and cooperation with law enforcement weakens. Procedural justice theory, therefore, provides a framework to assess how BSF actions impact evidentiary integrity and the local authority's legitimacy. Furthermore, studies in international policing (Bennett & Worrall, 2022) find that integrating community-based responders requires competency-based training and alignment with professional policing standards.

In conclusion, the literature indicates that crime scene preservation is essential to the justice process and requires both technical expertise and ethical discipline. Both global and local studies acknowledge that technological advancements are transforming forensic practice, yet the competency of first responders remains a foundational element of justice. The Philippine context underscores the urgent need for structured capacity-building initiatives and improved inter-agency coordination. Identified gaps in operational practices, perceptions, and training among BSF personnel justify the necessity of this research. Addressing these deficiencies will fill a critical gap in the literature and provide actionable recommendations to enhance barangay-level crime scene response, thereby aligning local practices with national and international investigative standards.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework/Paradigm of the Study

This study is anchored on Organizational Culture Theory, which examines how shared values influence behavior within organizations, and the Input-Process-Output (IPO) Model, which

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breaks down processes into inputs, processes, and outputs. The study is also supported by Republic Act No. 7160 (Local Government Code of 1991), which provides a legal basis for local governance, and DILG Memorandum Circular 2003-42, which outlines operational guidelines for local bodies and defines the BSF's responsibilities in maintaining peace and order, ensuring their functions support local governance and community safety.

Organizational Culture Theory (Davis et al., 2020) explains how shared values and practices shape member performance. This study evaluates how the Barangay Security Force (BSF) culture influences compliance with crime scene preservation procedures. Gardner (2018) highlights the need for systematic crime scene reconstruction and emphasizes the importance of trained, disciplined responders in evidence handling.

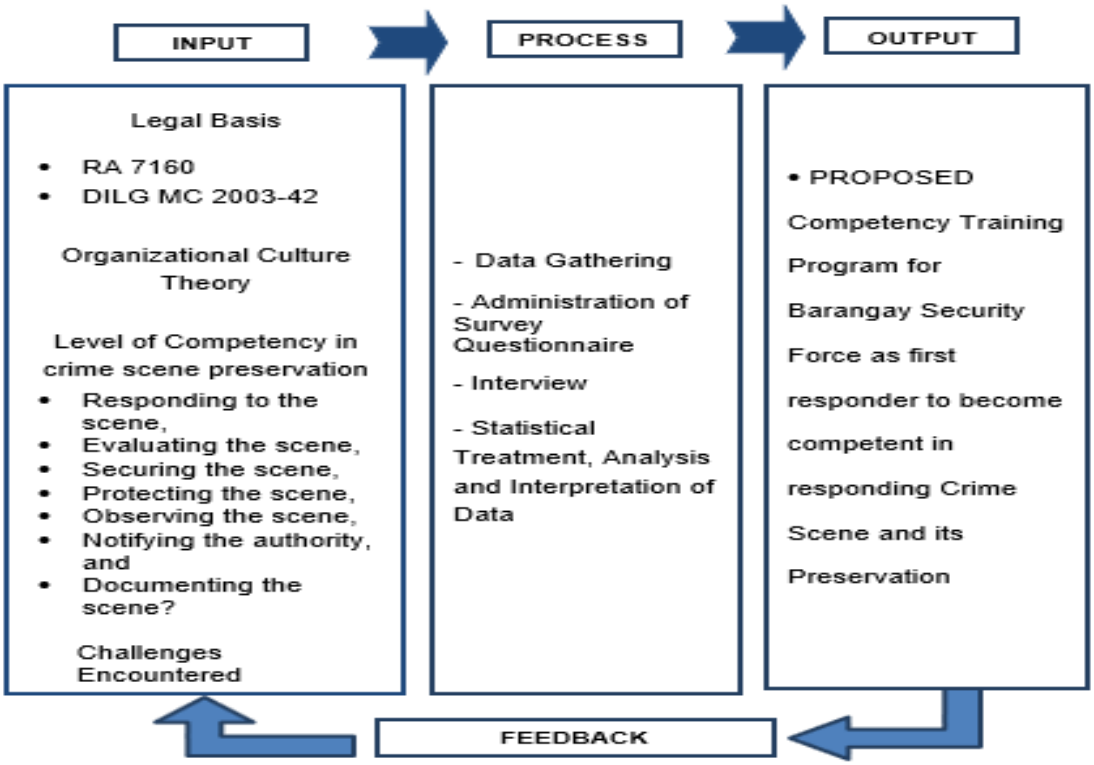


Figure 1. Paradigm of the Study

Applying the IPO Model, the study identifies the Input as the legal basis, theoretical foundation, and BSF competencies; the Process as data collection, analysis, and interpretation; and the Output as an enhancement program to improve BSF competencies in crime scene preservation.

This integrated framework combines organizational, legal, and operational concepts to address gaps in BSF performance and strengthen their capacity for effective crime scene management.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is significant as it may assist members of the Barangay Security Force (BSF), the designated security personnel of the local community, in improving crime scene preservation methods. By identifying specific challenges and training requirements, the research aims to enhance BSF competencies in securing, documenting, and safeguarding crime scenes. These improvements are expected to increase public safety and strengthen community trust in local first responders.

The findings may inform Barangay Chairpersons and the Taguig City Government in developing targeted training programs and policy reforms to improve coordination among the BSF, the Philippine National Police, and forensic units. Law enforcement agencies, including the Taguig City Police Station and Scene of Crime Operations (SOCO) Teams, can utilize the results to streamline investigative procedures, minimize evidence contamination, and maintain procedural integrity during investigations.

This study contributes to criminological knowledge regarding grassroots-level crime scene management and provides an empirical foundation for future policy development and academic discourse. The framework established may be replicated or expanded in other localities, supporting the development of a more responsive and professional community-based security force.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This study evaluated the competency and challenges of Barangay First Responders in crime scene preservation within the framework of local governance and law enforcement collaboration in Taguig City. The study focused on the following objectives:

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1. To determine the level of competency of the respondents in crime scene preservation in terms of:
   1.1. Responding to the scene,
   1.2. Evaluating the scene,
   1.3. Securing the scene,
   1.4. Protecting the scene,
   1.5. Observing the scene,
   1.6. Notifying the authority, and
   1.7. Documenting the scene.
2. To compare the level of competency in crime scene preservation among the groups of respondents (Barangay Security Force [BSF], Community Members [CM], and Philippine National Police [PNP]).
3. To identify the challenges encountered by Barangay First Responders in crime scene preservation and the implementation of their other duties.
4. To propose an enhancement program based on the findings of the study to improve the competency of Barangay First Responders in crime scene preservation.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used an Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design, as described by Creswell and Plano Clark (2018), integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to assess the competency and challenges of Barangay Security Force (BSF) members in crime scene preservation. The first phase gathered quantitative data through structured questionnaires to measure BSF members' competency levels, focusing on knowledge, skills, and performance in handling crime scenes. Based on these results, the next phase used in-depth interviews to explore the challenges and contextual factors influencing their competency. This process examined measurable differences among groups, such as the BSF, Philippine National Police (PNP), and community members, and provided deeper insights into issues affecting BSF performance. By integrating both methods, the study ensured a more accurate and holistic understanding of the problem, in line with the objective of enhancing BSF competencies in crime scene preservation.

Research Method

This study utilized an Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative methodologies to evaluate the competency and challenges faced by Barangay Security Force (BSF) members in crime scene preservation. The research commenced with a quantitative phase, employing structured survey questionnaires to collect data on BSF knowledge, skills, and practices in crime scene response and evidence management. Subsequently, the qualitative phase involved interviews and focus group discussions with BSF members, Philippine National Police (PNP) personnel, and community representatives. These qualitative methods examined and interpreted the patterns identified in the quantitative data, providing detailed insight into factors influencing BSF performance. The integration of survey and interview data enhanced the comprehensiveness, reliability, and validity of the study's findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

Population of the Study

The study included 310 participants from Taguig City, divided into three groups: Barangay Security Force (BSF) personnel, Philippine National Police (PNP) officers assigned to the Taguig City Police Station, and selected community members from Barangays New Lower Bicutan, Western Bicutan, and Fort Bonifacio. Participants were eligible if they were directly involved in crime scene response and preservation (BSF and PNP) or had firsthand experience or awareness of such responses in their community (community members). Those not meeting these criteria were excluded.

Purposive sampling was used to select 100 BSF personnel, who serve as the primary subjects and first responders responsible for peace, order, and crime scene preservation in their barangays. For the PNP group, 110 officers were chosen through simple random sampling from all units under the Taguig City Police Station including the members of Taguig City SOCO to ensure equal representation. The third group, 100 community members, was also selected purposively to provide local perspectives on BSF competency and challenges.

The sample size was based on the available population and distributed nearly equally among the three groups to ensure balanced representation and reliable comparison. Participants were recruited voluntarily through formal coordination with barangay offices, the Taguig City Police Station, and community leaders.

Data Gathering Tools

The study used a survey created by the researcher and expert consultations to gather information about the skills and challenges of Barangay Security Force (BSF) personnel in preserving crime scenes. The survey had two main sections: one focused on crime scene preservation skills, and the other on additional responsibilities and challenges. It measured abilities such as responding to incidents, securing and protecting the area, observing, notifying authorities, documenting the scene, patrolling, handling emergencies, and identifying suspicious people.

To make sure the survey was accurate and relevant, the researcher consulted with the Chief of Police of Taguig City, the head of the Southern Police District Forensic Unit, and the leader of the Taguig City SOCO Team. Their feedback helped confirm that the survey covered the right topics and used the correct language, making it consistent with law enforcement procedures and standards.

The survey's validity and reliability were checked through expert review and a pilot test with 30 people (15 BSF and 15 PNP) who were not part of the main study. The internal consistency, measured by Cronbach's Alpha, was 0.999, showing that the

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survey is highly reliable and consistently measures skills related to crime scene preservation and responder competency.

Additionally, the researcher-developed instrument drew on frameworks from Republic Act No. 7160 (Local Government Code of 1991) and DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2003-42 to ensure legal and procedural alignment with barangay-level public safety operations.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data gathering process for this study was carried out systematically to ensure accuracy, reliability, and validity of the collected data. The researcher first developed a structured survey questionnaire based on the study's objectives and variables related to the competency and challenges of the Barangay Security Force (BSF), the local community security unit, in crime scene preservation. The instrument underwent validation through consultations with experts, including an academician, the Chief of Police of Taguig City, and the Chief of the Southern Police District Forensic Unit. Their feedback was incorporated to refine the final version of the tool.

Once the survey instrument was finalized, formal communication followed. Letters of permission were sent to the Chief of Police of the Taguig City Police Station, the Chief of the Taguig City SOCO Office, and the Barangay Chairpersons of New Lower Bicutan, Western Bicutan, and Fort Bonifacio, seeking authorization to administer the survey and conduct interviews within their jurisdictions. Upon approval, the researcher then coordinated with administrative personnel for the distribution of the survey questionnaires.

Subsequently, the questionnaires were personally distributed to the identified respondents, including Barangay Security Force personnel, police officers, and community members. After a set period, the completed questionnaires were collected, ensuring all forms were properly filled out. The entire survey distribution and retrieval process took place between June and July 2025.

After the quantitative phase, the study proceeded to gather qualitative data through interviews and consultations with selected BSF officers, PNP personnel, and barangay officials. This step supplemented and contextualized the survey results, providing deeper insights into the challenges and competencies of BSF in crime scene preservation. The data gathered were then organized, tabulated, and statistically treated with the assistance of a statistician to ensure that the findings were both reliable and comprehensive.

Treatment of Data

Survey data were summarized, tabulated, and statistically analyzed to address the research questions and test the hypotheses. Descriptive statistics, such as frequency counts, percentages, weighted means, and standard deviations, described respondent demographics and assessed competency and challenges in crime scene preservation. Likert scale responses were quantified and interpreted using weighted means to measure agreement with each statement.

For inferential analysis, ANOVA identified significant differences in responses among Barangay Security Force, Philippine National Police, and community members regarding competency and challenges. All analyses were conducted using SPSS, with significance set at 0.05. This approach ensured statistically valid and reliable findings that support the study's objective of evaluating Barangay Security Force competency in crime scene preservation in Taguig City.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to ethical standards by maintaining respondent anonymity and confidentiality, and by ensuring voluntary participation. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any stage without penalty. Identifying information was not collected, and all research materials were securely stored. Data were used exclusively for research, with interview quotations anonymized. Risk management protocols included conducting interviews and focus groups in neutral, secure locations and permitting respondents to omit uncomfortable questions. Participant selection was based solely on relevance to crime scene preservation and community safety, without discrimination by gender, age, religion, or socio-economic status. Study findings will be disseminated to stakeholders such as barangay officials, local police, and community leaders, as well as through academic forums and publications, to inform improvements in protocols, training, and competency in crime scene preservation.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. The level of competency of the respondents in crime scene preservation

Level of competency of the respondents in crime scene preservation (Responding to the scene)

Table 1

Level of competency of the respondents in crime scene preservation (Responding to the scene)

Indicator	*Barangay Security Force*		*Philippine National Police*		*Community Member*		*Overall Weighted Mean*	
	M	*VI*	*M*	*VI*	*M*	*VI*	*M*	*VI*
1. Responders arrive promptly at the scene after being notified.	3.02	C	2.55	C	2.12	LC	**2.56**	**C**
2. Responders remain calm and professional upon arrival.	3.00	C	1.81	LC	1.88	LC	**2.22**	**LC**
3. Responders understand their duties during initial response.	2.87	C	1.94	LC	2.46	LC	**2.41**	**LC**
4. Responders take immediate steps to stabilize the scene.	2.98	C	2.07	LC	1.91	LC	**2.31**	**LC**
5. Responders communicate effectively with other emergency units.	2.86	C	2.13	LC	2.03	LC	**2.33**	**LC**
6. Responders prioritize safety and evidence preservation.	3.01	C	2.26	LC	2.38	LC	**2.54**	**C**
7. Responders properly assess the level of urgency in various incidents.	3.10	C	2.58	C	1.77	LC	**2.49**	**LC**
8. Responders are physically prepared to respond to any time of day.	2.78	C	2.38	LC	2.25	LC	**2.47**	**LC**
9. Responders demonstrate readiness with proper equipment.	3.00	C	2.45	LC	1.83	LC	**2.42**	**LC**
10. Responders are trained to react quickly and appropriately to crime scene calls.	2.99	C	2.47	LC	2.14	LC	**2.53**	**C**
Overall	**2.96**	**C**	**2.26**	**LC**	**2.07**	**LC**	**2.42**	**LC**

Legend: M = Mean VI = Verbal Interpretation
3.25 – 4.00 = Highly Competent (HC) 2.50 – 3.24 = Competent (C)
1.75 – 2.49 = Less Competent (LC) 1.00 – 1.74 = Not Competent (NC)

Table 1 summarizes respondents' competency in crime scene response. The overall weighted mean is 2.42, classified as Less Competent. The Barangay Security Force (BSF) is the most competent group with a mean of 2.96. The Philippine National Police (PNP) and Community Members scored lower, with means of 2.26 and 2.07. Respondents are most competent in arriving promptly (2.56) and prioritizing safety and evidence preservation (2.54). Competency is lowest in stabilizing the scene (2.31) and maintaining professionalism upon arrival (2.22).

The Barangay Security Force demonstrates greater competency in crime scene response, particularly in prompt arrival, safety, evidence preservation, and equipment readiness. The PNP and Community Members show lower competency. The weakest areas are maintaining professionalism upon arrival (2.22) and stabilizing the scene (2.31).

The findings indicate that the BSF's proximity to the community and familiarity with local context improve early response performance. However, lower scores in scene stabilization and professionalism across all groups reveal key areas needing improvement. These results support previous research highlighting the importance of training and preparedness for effective crime scene management. Inconsistent adherence to procedures, as noted in recent studies, continues to affect evidence integrity and reflects the lower competencies observed in the PNP and community members.

THE CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED OF THE BARANGAY FIRST RESPONDER IN PRESERVING THE CRIME SCENE

The challenges do by the Barangay First Responder in preserving the crime scene from the time of your arrival in terms of Operational Challenges in Crime Scene Preservation

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The research indicates that Barangay First Responders (BFRs) have many operational challenges in maintaining crime scenes, especially regarding crowd management and community emotional engagement. Numerous participants saw the challenge of controlling bystanders and the immediate relatives of victims, who frequently disrupt crime scene security due to emotional turmoil. This jeopardizes the integrity of prospective evidence and subjects the BFRs to high-stress circumstances without adequate authority or resources to uphold order. These repeated incidents underscore a fundamental deficiency in operational norms and readiness at the grassroots level.

The operating restrictions are exacerbated by inadequate equipment and the absence of structured, consistent training. BFRs indicated that, in many cases, they lack important tools such as barrier tapes, documentation kits, or communication devices necessary for protecting a scene. The delay in police arrival complicates problems, requiring BFRs to manage crime scenes for prolonged durations without explicit direction. The absence of formal protocols renders them ill-equipped to address intricate criminal situations, resulting in irregularities in crime scene management and undermining the overall efficacy of law enforcement responses.

The results demonstrate the necessity of formalizing operational protocols and providing Barangay First Responders with the requisite equipment and information for effective crime scene preservation. In the absence of explicit authority, standardized equipment, or specialized training, BFRs are susceptible to operational failures that may compromise the administration of justice. Enhancing local response systems via formal training programs, explicit rules, and coordinated protocols with law enforcement can substantially improve the integrity of grassroots crime scene management, guaranteeing that justice commences from the initial moment of reaction.

Challenges observed by the police officers that the Barangay First Responders face in performing their other responsibilities aside from crime scene preservation

Barangay First Responders (BFRs) encounter considerable operational constraints in executing their many responsibilities beyond crime scene preservation. The replies from police participants indicate that a primary concern is the insufficient specialized training and technical proficiency among BFRs, which impedes their effectiveness in addressing circumstances like personal conflicts, public disruptions, or big assemblies. Numerous officers observed that responders frequently lack fundamental crowd control expertise, effective conflict de-escalation techniques, and a definitive comprehension of their responsibilities. This leads to bewilderment, inactivity, or overreach, all of which can intensify difficult circumstances instead of alleviating them. The absence of emergency equipment, including communication devices and first aid kits, significantly diminishes their response efficacy.

A significant challenge is the extensive array of responsibilities allocated to BFRs, encompassing patrolling, traffic regulation, emergency response, and environmental stewardship. Due to extensive coverage and constrained personnel, responders frequently function in a generic capacity instead of cultivating specialization or expertise in critical domains. This expansive mission results in inadequate documentation methods, challenges in work prioritization, and a reduced capacity to provide coordinated long-term operations. In the absence of institutional support and defined roles, BFRs risk becoming overwhelmed and ineffectual, notwithstanding their profound dedication to public service.

These findings corroborate prior research highlighting that first responders in community-based environments have difficulties when their duties are ambiguous or when they lack requisite technical skills (Santos et al., 2022). Studies highlighting the susceptibility of barangay-level responders during emergencies have emphasized the necessity for specialized training and suitable equipment (Lopez, 2021). Moreover, crowd control and conflict resolution necessitate urgent focus, as highlighted by Rivera and Mendoza (2020), who contend that without sufficient legal and psychological training, barangay officials may exacerbate confrontations.

The difficulties faced by police officers when interacting with barangay first responders highlight systemic deficiencies in training, role definition, and resource distribution. These concerns undermine emergency response outcomes and impede police-community partnership. The conclusions underscore the pressing necessity for capacity enhancement, resource allocation, and explicit role delineation for barangay responders, guaranteeing their effective support of law enforcement and public safety within their authority.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study found that the Barangay Security Force (BSF) demonstrated lower competence in crime scene preservation, including response, evaluation, protection, observation, notification, and documentation. BSF members exhibited only intermediate capability in securing crime scenes. This limitation, attributed to insufficient formal training, inadequate resources, and ambiguous operational guidelines, undermines the integrity of initial response and can negatively impact subsequent investigations. In comparison, the Philippine National Police (PNP) consistently achieved higher performance across all domains, supported by structured training, standardized protocols, and sufficient investigative tools. Statistically significant differences among BSF, PNP, and community members indicate that institutional capacity, training, and jurisdictional authority are critical determinants of performance in crime scene management.

Challenges such as insufficient equipment, excessive workload, weak coordination with law enforcement, unclear operational mandates, and concerns about liability further impede effective performance. These results highlight the urgent need for comprehensive capacity-building, formalized role definitions,

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legal protections, and enhanced interagency collaboration to improve BSF operational efficiency as first responders at the barangay level.

To address identified gaps in capability and coordination, several targeted recommendations are proposed. First, a standardized, competency-based training program on crime scene preservation should be established for BSF members. This program must include modules on evidence handling, scene protection, documentation, and reporting protocols, developed in collaboration with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), PNP Forensic Group, local government units, and barangay councils. Second, BSF members should be integrated into regional and national training frameworks led by the PNP and public safety training institutions, allowing participation in simulation exercises and capacity-building activities to improve operational readiness. Third, city or municipal ordinances should clearly define BSF roles and responsibilities in patrolling, emergency response, and environmental monitoring to eliminate ambiguity, prevent overlap with PNP duties, and establish accountability. Fourth, legal mechanisms and operational guidelines must be implemented to protect BSF members acting in good faith, supported by documented protocols, technology-based reporting tools, and regular joint drills to enhance confidence and response accuracy. Finally, local government units, through the DILG, should facilitate Memorandums of Agreement between the PNP and barangays to institutionalize operational cooperation, ensure interoperability, formalize shared responsibilities, and legally empower the BSF as an auxiliary force in crime scene management and community safety.

Implementation of these targeted interventions will enable the BSF to serve as a reliable frontline component in community-based crime prevention and investigative support.

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Memorandum

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