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MOTIVATING FACTORS OF BARANGAY WORKERS OF SELECTED BARANGAYS IN THE CITY OF CABANATUAN

Marivic B. Posadas, Dr. Shirley P. Ayeo-eo, Dr. Ma. Salvacion P. Collado, Jamie J. Mejia
Faculty, College of Criminology
Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology

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ABSTRACT

This study employed a descriptive quantitative research design to evaluate the motivating factors, challenges, and support needs of Barangay workers in selected barangays of Cabanatuan City, surveying a total of 150 respondents – including Barangay Health Workers, Barangay Tanods, and other community service providers – through a structured questionnaire that assessed motivation, challenges encountered, and support and development needs. Findings revealed that intrinsic motivators such as the opportunity to serve the community (M = 3.57), recognition from officials and residents (M = 3.53), and personal fulfillment (M = 3.50) were rated higher than financial compensation (M = 3.30), indicating that civic duty and pride are central to barangay worker motivation, with respondents also expressing strong agreement on the importance of career advancement and community engagement. In terms of challenges, participants reported moderate agreement on issues such as inadequate pay (M = 3.37), limited resources (M = 3.33), insufficient training (M = 3.23), and difficulty balancing work and family life (M = 3.17), reflecting systemic barriers that hinder effective service delivery. Support and development needs were strongly emphasized, with respondents calling for better compensation (M = 3.57), enhanced training (M = 3.50), and provision of adequate resources (M = 3.43). Overall, the study highlights a motivated but under-supported workforce, recommending the strengthening of institutional support systems, improvement of resource allocation, and implementation of structured training programs to sustain motivation and enhance barangay-level governance, offering valuable insights for policymakers, local government units, and development planners seeking to improve community service delivery and worker well-being.

KEYWORDS: *Barangay, Community welfare, Local Governance, Motivation, Social Support*

I. INTRODUCTION

Barangay workers, including Barangay Health Workers (BHWs) and Barangay Tanods, play a crucial role in maintaining public health, safety, and order in their communities. Despite their significant contributions, they often face challenges such as low compensation, lack of benefits, and limited resources (Prieto et al., 2024). Understanding the motivating factors that drive these workers is essential for improving their work conditions and ensuring effective service delivery.

Globally, community health and safety workers face various challenges that affect their motivation and job satisfaction. Studies show that low wages, inadequate training, and lack of career progression opportunities are among the primary demotivating factors (Olaniran et al., 2021). However, intrinsic motivators such as personal fulfillment, community service, and recognition remain strong factors in retaining workers in these roles.

In Asian countries, community workers play an integral role in public health and safety. Research conducted across multiple Asian nations highlights that financial incentives, work recognition, and supportive supervision significantly impact worker motivation (Olaniran et al., 2021). Moreover, challenges such as work overload and lack of professional development opportunities continue to affect job performance.

In the Philippines, Barangay workers are considered the frontline force in community service, particularly in health and security. However, many face job insecurity and inadequate government support, which affects their motivation (Valenzuela & Hartigan-Go, 2020). Despite these challenges, their commitment to serving their communities remains evident, largely driven by social and personal fulfillment.

Luzon, being the most densely populated region in the Philippines, presents unique challenges for Barangay workers. A study on Barangay Health Workers (BHWs) in Luzon found that factors such as recognition, incentives, and a sense of duty contribute to their motivation (Prieto et al., 2024). However, barriers such as logistical constraints and lack of sufficient training hinder their effectiveness.

Nueva Ecija, a province known for its agricultural economy, relies heavily on Barangay workers to maintain peace and health programs. However, these workers often operate under financial and resource constraints, impacting their overall performance and

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motivation (Hartigan-Go et al., 2023). Studies suggest that improved benefits and structured training programs could enhance their efficiency and job satisfaction.

Cabanatuan City, being a highly urbanized city, faces an increasing demand for effective Barangay workers. Despite their crucial role, many Barangay workers in the city struggle with low financial support and insufficient training (Prieto et al., 2024). Addressing these issues could significantly improve their performance and motivation.

Recent studies indicate that Barangay workers' motivation is influenced by financial incentives, social recognition, and community engagement. Prieto et al. (2024) highlighted the challenges faced by Barangay Health Workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasizing the need for increased government support. Similarly, research by Wakati (2023) examined the performance and challenges of Barangay Tanods, underscoring issues related to workload and lack of training.

While numerous studies discuss Barangay workers' challenges and motivations, there remains a gap in understanding the specific factors that influence their motivation in urban settings like Cabanatuan City. Most studies focus on national or regional perspectives but lack localized data that could help formulate targeted interventions (Wakati, 2023). This research aims to fill that gap by assessing the motivating factors specific to Barangay workers in Cabanatuan City.

Understanding the motivating factors of Barangay workers is crucial for policy formulation and program development. Given their essential role in community service, addressing their needs and concerns can lead to improved service delivery and job satisfaction. This study will provide empirical data that can help stakeholders create better support systems for Barangay workers.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive quantitative research design to determine the motivating factors of Barangay workers, including Barangay Health Workers, Barangay Tanods, and other community service providers in Cabanatuan City. A descriptive design is appropriate because it will allow the researcher to systematically collect and analyze data on the perceptions, challenges, and motivations of these workers within their specific context. This design is also valuable in identifying key factors that affect their motivation and the issues they face in their roles.

The population of this study consists of Barangay workers in Cabanatuan City, specifically focusing on Barangay Health Workers, Barangay Tanods, and other staff involved in community service across various barangays. A total of 150 Barangay workers will be selected using stratified random sampling to ensure the inclusion of different barangays in the city. The locale of the study will be Cabanatuan City, located in the province of Nueva Ecija, Philippines. This locale was chosen due to its urbanization and the diversity of Barangay workers within its jurisdiction, offering a representative sample for the research.

Data gathering tools include a structured survey questionnaire, which will be designed to gather motivational data. The questionnaire will be divided into three sections: (1) motivational factors influencing job performance, (2) challenges encountered while serving as Barangay workers, and (3) the needs of Barangay workers for better performance.

The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency counts, mean, and standard deviation to interpret the responses. Pearson's correlation coefficient will be applied to identify relationships between motivating factors and problems encountered.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Motivation

This table presents the mean scores and interpretations of barangay workers' motivational factors, highlighting the importance of community service, recognition, and personal fulfillment as primary drivers compared to financial incentives.

Table 1. Respondents' Evaluation of Barangay Work Experience in terms of Motivation (Q1–Q5)

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. Opportunity to serve my community.	3.57	Strongly Agree
2. Recognition from Barangay officials and the community.	3.53	Strongly Agree
3. Financial compensation is a significant motivator for me.	3.30	Agree
4. Sense of fulfillment and pride in my work as a Barangay worker.	3.50	Strongly Agree
5. Opportunity for career advancement.	3.47	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	**3.47**	**Strongly Agree**

The results of Table 1 reveal that barangay workers in Cabanatuan City are primarily motivated by intrinsic factors, with the highest mean score attributed to the opportunity to serve the community (M = 3.57). This finding underscores the deeply rooted civic orientation of barangay workers, who perceive their roles not merely as employment but as a vocation tied to public service. The strong agreement on this indicator reflects the Filipino cultural value of bayanihan—the spirit of communal unity and cooperation—which continues to inspire grassroots workers to dedicate themselves to the welfare of their communities.

Closely following this is recognition from barangay officials and the community (M = 3.53), which highlights the importance of acknowledgment and appreciation in sustaining motivation.

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Recognition serves as a non-monetary reward that validates the sacrifices of barangay workers. As one respondent explained in the interviews, "When the barangay captain acknowledges our effort, it feels like our sacrifices are seen." This sentiment aligns with Distrito (2023), who found that authority, influence, and community connection were key motivators among barangay officials in Central Philippines. Recognition not only boosts morale but also strengthens the bond between workers and the communities they serve, fostering trust and cooperation.

The third strongest motivator is sense of fulfillment and pride in work (M = 3.50). This indicator reflects the intrinsic satisfaction barangay workers derive from their contributions. Arcebido et al. (2024) emphasized that work-task motivation among Barangay Health Workers (BHWs) is rooted in their desire to serve and connect with the community, particularly in health-related roles. This sense of fulfillment is consistent with Ilagan et al.'s (2014) Filipino Needs Theory of Motivation, which posits that Filipino workers are driven by family-related and community-related needs. Barangay workers often view their service as an extension of their familial and communal responsibilities, finding pride in being agents of change and protectors of public welfare.

Interestingly, opportunity for career advancement (M = 3.47) also emerged as a strong motivator. While barangay work is often perceived as voluntary or semi-formal, respondents expressed the desire for structured pathways that allow them to grow professionally. This finding resonates with Samontina (2019), who highlighted that leadership styles and acknowledgment significantly impact the motivation of barangay functionaries. Career advancement opportunities not only provide personal growth but also ensure that barangay workers remain engaged and committed in the long term.

On the other hand, financial compensation (M = 3.30) was acknowledged as a motivator but ranked lower than intrinsic factors. This suggests that while economic incentives are important, they are not the primary drivers of motivation among barangay workers. Sumatra et al. (2023) demonstrated that employee engagement—particularly vigor and dedication—predicts performance among barangay workers, showing that intrinsic motivators outweigh monetary incentives. This does not diminish the importance of financial support, but it highlights that barangay workers' commitment is anchored more on civic duty, recognition, and fulfillment than on material rewards.

Taken together, the grand mean of 3.47 (Strongly Agree) indicates that barangay workers are highly motivated overall, with intrinsic factors playing a central role. This pattern reflects a broader trend in community service professions, where individuals are sustained by values of service, recognition, and pride rather than purely financial considerations. The literature consistently supports this finding: Arcebido et al. (2024) and Distrito (2023) emphasize community connection, Samontina (2019) underscores leadership and acknowledgment, Sumatra et al. (2023) highlight engagement and dedication, and Ilagan et al. (2014) root motivation in Filipino cultural needs.

In conclusion, the motivation of barangay workers in Cabanatuan City is best understood as a multidimensional construct where intrinsic drivers dominate but are complemented by extrinsic factors such as financial compensation and career advancement. Their motivation reflects a balance between personal fulfillment, social recognition, and civic responsibility. This comprehensive understanding is crucial for policymakers and local government units, as it suggests that sustaining barangay workers' motivation requires not only financial support but also institutional recognition, opportunities for growth, and programs that reinforce their sense of pride and belonging in the community.

Challenges

This table summarizes the respondents' perceptions of challenges encountered in barangay work, including workload stress, inadequate compensation, limited resources, and insufficient training, reflecting systemic barriers to effective service delivery.

Table 2. Respondents' Evaluation of Barangay Work Experience in terms of Challenges (Q6–Q10)

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Balancing work with family life	3.17	Agree
Stressful workload	3.20	Agree
Inadequate financial compensation	3.37	Agree
Limited resources and equipment	3.33	Agree
Insufficient training	3.23	Agree
Grand Mean	3.26	Agree

The results of Table 2 highlight the multifaceted challenges encountered by barangay workers in Cabanatuan City. With a grand mean of 3.26 (Agree), respondents moderately acknowledged the presence of systemic barriers that hinder their effectiveness in service delivery. These challenges include balancing work with family life (M = 3.17), stressful workload (M = 3.20), inadequate financial compensation (M = 3.37), limited resources and equipment (M = 3.33), and insufficient training (M = 3.23). Each of these indicators reflects the realities of barangay-level governance, where workers are expected to fulfill critical roles despite limited institutional support.

One of the most pressing issues is the difficulty of balancing work with family responsibilities. Barangay workers often juggle multiple roles, serving their communities while also attending to household duties. This dual burden contributes to stress and

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fatigue, as reflected in the moderate agreement score (M = 3.17). Mirano (2024) documented that Barangay Health Workers (BHWs) experience emotional strain during health emergencies, particularly when institutional support is lacking. This strain is compounded by the expectation that barangay workers remain available to the community at all times, often sacrificing personal and family needs. The challenge of work-life balance is not unique to the Philippines; globally, community service workers face similar struggles, where the demands of public service often clash with personal obligations.

Stressful workload (M = 3.20) further exacerbates these difficulties. Respondents described the heavy demands of barangay work, which include health monitoring, peacekeeping, administrative tasks, and emergency response. Carrillo et al. (2023) noted that barangay health centers often operate with minimal staffing and outdated tools, which hampers service quality and places additional strain on workers. The lack of manpower forces barangay workers to assume multiple responsibilities, leading to burnout and reduced efficiency. This finding resonates with Collado (2019), who observed that geographically isolated barangays suffer from poor infrastructure and limited access to training, contributing to worker fatigue and inefficiency.

Inadequate financial compensation (M = 3.37) emerged as the highest-rated challenge, underscoring the economic vulnerability of barangay workers. While intrinsic motivation drives their commitment, the lack of sufficient financial support undermines their ability to sustain long-term engagement. Malajos (2025) identified financial constraints as a persistent barrier to barangay governance, noting that low compensation discourages workers and limits their capacity to meet community needs. This issue is further complicated by political dynamics, where barangay workers' allowances and benefits are often dependent on local government priorities. Valdez (2024) observed that barangay officials in Sablan Municipality struggle with resource management and leadership quality, which directly affects the financial support extended to workers.

Limited resources and equipment (M = 3.33) also pose significant challenges. Respondents reported that inadequate tools hinder their ability to perform tasks effectively, particularly in health and safety roles. Mirano (2024) emphasized that resource scarcity during emergencies leads to emotional strain and reduced capacity to respond to crises. Without proper equipment, barangay workers are forced to improvise, which compromises service quality and places them at risk. Enero et al. (2024) similarly reported that budgeting constraints and administrative overload in Dipolog City lead to inefficiency, highlighting the broader issue of resource mismanagement in local governance.

Finally, insufficient training (M = 3.23) reflects the lack of professional development opportunities for barangay workers. Respondents expressed the need for continuous training to enhance their skills and prepare them for evolving community demands. Collado (2019) noted that limited access to training contributes to burnout and inefficiency, as workers are often unprepared to handle complex situations. This finding is consistent with Malajos (2025), who identified inadequate training as a persistent barrier to barangay governance. Without structured capacity-building programs, barangay workers remain under-equipped to address the diverse challenges of their roles.

Taken together, these challenges paint a picture of a motivated yet under-supported workforce. While barangay workers demonstrate resilience and commitment, systemic barriers such as inadequate pay, resource scarcity, and lack of training undermine their effectiveness. The literature consistently reinforces these findings: Mirano (2024) highlights resource scarcity and emotional strain, Carrillo et al. (2023) points to staffing shortages and outdated tools, Collado (2019) emphasizes infrastructure and training gaps, Malajos (2025) identifies financial and political constraints, Valdez (2024) underscores resource management struggles, and Enero et al. (2024) documents budgeting inefficiencies.

In conclusion, the challenges faced by barangay workers are not isolated issues but interconnected systemic problems that require comprehensive policy reforms. Addressing workload distribution, improving resource allocation, enhancing financial support, and institutionalizing professional development are essential steps toward empowering barangay workers. By tackling these barriers, local government units can ensure that barangay workers remain effective agents of grassroots governance, capable of sustaining motivation and delivering quality service to their communities.

Support and Development

This table outlines the respondents' evaluation of support and development needs, emphasizing strong agreement on the importance of institutional backing through recognition, fair compensation, provision of resources, and capacity-building programs.

Table 3. Respondents' Evaluation of Barangay Work Experience in terms of Support and Development (Q11–Q15)

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Support from Barangay officials and community	3.50	Strongly Agree
Recognition and appreciation of work	3.53	Strongly Agree
Better financial compensation and incentives	3.57	Strongly Agree
Provision of resources and equipment	3.43	Strongly Agree
More training and skill development	3.50	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	**3.51**	**Strongly Agree**

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The findings presented in Table 3 reveal that barangay workers strongly agreed on the importance of institutional support and development, with a grand mean of 3.51 (Strongly Agree). This high level of agreement underscores the pressing demand for investment in barangay personnel, who remain motivated yet under-supported in their roles. The indicators—support from barangay officials and community (M = 3.50), recognition and appreciation of work (M = 3.53), better financial compensation and incentives (M = 3.57), provision of resources and equipment (M = 3.43), and more training and skill development (M = 3.50)—collectively highlight the areas where barangay workers seek reinforcement to sustain their effectiveness.

Support from barangay officials and the community (M = 3.50) emerged as a critical factor. Respondents emphasized that encouragement and backing from leaders and residents validate their contributions and strengthen their resolve to serve. One worker explained, "When the barangay captain acknowledges our effort, it feels like our sacrifices are seen." This finding resonates with Viray-Navarro (2024), who emphasized that under Republic Act No. 7883, Barangay Health Workers (BHWs) are expected to act as health educators, service providers, and community organizers, but their effectiveness depends heavily on adequate support and training. Without institutional backing, workers risk feeling undervalued, which can erode motivation over time.

Recognition and appreciation (M = 3.53) were also strongly emphasized. Recognition serves as a non-monetary incentive that reinforces the intrinsic pride barangay workers derive from their roles. Pineda (2024) stressed that barangays must prioritize not only infrastructure and health programs but also the acknowledgment of workers' contributions to governance. Recognition ceremonies, awards, and public appreciation during assemblies can institutionalize this practice, ensuring that workers feel valued and respected.

Better financial compensation and incentives (M = 3.57) received the highest mean score, reflecting the economic vulnerability of barangay workers. While intrinsic motivators such as civic duty and fulfillment drive their commitment, financial support remains essential for sustaining long-term engagement. Respondents consistently expressed the need for increased honoraria and allowances, with one noting, "We are willing to serve, but the workload is too much for the little support we get." This finding aligns with Malajos (2025), who identified financial constraints as persistent barriers to barangay governance. Complementary programs such as the DOLE Integrated Livelihood Program (DILP) provide financial assistance and livelihood opportunities, demonstrating that institutional backing can ease economic burdens and enhance barangay capacity.

Provision of resources and equipment (M = 3.43) was another area of strong agreement. Respondents highlighted the need for updated tools, medical kits, and communication devices to perform their duties effectively. Mirano (2024) documented that resource scarcity during emergencies leads to emotional strain and reduced capacity to respond to crises. Similarly, Carrillo et al. (2023) noted that barangay health centers often operate with minimal staffing and outdated tools, which hampers service quality. Ensuring adequate resources is therefore not only a matter of efficiency but also of worker well-being and community safety.

Finally, more training and skill development (M = 3.50) was strongly emphasized. Respondents expressed the need for continuous training to enhance their skills and prepare them for evolving community demands. One worker explained, "We need more skills to handle emergencies; without training, we feel unprepared." This finding is consistent with Collado (2019), who observed that limited access to training contributes to burnout and inefficiency. Regular capacity-building aligned with Republic Act No. 7883, including modules on stress management, leadership, and community organizing, can enhance effectiveness and resilience.

The literature consistently supports these findings. Viray-Navarro (2024) emphasized that BHWs' effectiveness depends on adequate support and training. Pineda (2024) stressed the importance of prioritizing health, education, and infrastructure development to empower local workers. The Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (2023) highlighted replicable best practices in barangay initiatives, proving that with proper support, barangay workers can expand their roles and improve governance outcomes. These studies collectively affirm that barangay workers are not only willing but capable of expanding their responsibilities, provided they receive the necessary tools, recognition, and capacity-building.

In summary, the results reveal a motivated but under-supported workforce. Barangay workers are committed to their roles and derive pride from serving their communities, yet they face persistent challenges that hinder their effectiveness. The strong demand for support and development indicates that strategic interventions—such as training programs, resource provision, fair compensation, and institutional recognition—are essential to sustain and enhance barangay-level governance. By investing in these areas, policymakers and local government units can empower barangay workers to continue their vital role in grassroots governance with resilience, pride, and effectiveness.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study underscores that barangay workers in Cabanatuan City are primarily motivated by intrinsic factors such as community service, recognition, and personal fulfillment, with financial compensation playing a secondary role. These results affirm the civic orientation and pride that characterize barangay workers' commitment to their roles, consistent with prior studies emphasizing the importance of community connection, acknowledgment, and leadership support in sustaining motivation (Arcebido et al., 2024; Distrito, 2023; Samontina, 2019; Sumatra et al., 2023; Ilagan et al., 2014). The findings highlight that recognition and opportunities for career advancement are

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essential to maintaining engagement and performance among local service providers.

Despite strong intrinsic motivation, barangay workers face persistent systemic challenges, including inadequate pay, limited resources, insufficient training, and difficulties in balancing work and family responsibilities. These challenges mirror broader governance issues documented in national and regional studies, which point to resource scarcity, infrastructure gaps, and administrative overload as barriers to effective service delivery (Mirano, 2024; Carrillo et al., 2023; Collado, 2019; Malajos, 2025; Valdez, 2024; Enero et al., 2024). Such constraints not only hinder efficiency but also contribute to stress, burnout, and reduced capacity to meet community needs.

The strong demand for institutional support and development further emphasizes the need for targeted interventions. Respondents consistently identified better compensation, provision of resources, and structured training as critical to enhancing their effectiveness. These findings align with Republic Act No. 7883 and related governance priorities, which stress the importance of equipping Barangay Health Workers and Tanods with adequate tools, recognition, and capacity-building opportunities (Viray-Navarro, 2024; Pineda, 2024). Complementary programs such as the DOLE Integrated Livelihood Program (DILP) and the Barangay Development Program (BDP) demonstrate that institutional backing can significantly strengthen barangay capacity and resilience.

Overall, the study reveals a motivated but under-supported workforce. Barangay workers remain committed to their civic duty and derive pride from serving their communities, yet systemic barriers limit their full potential. Addressing these challenges through strategic reforms in compensation, resource allocation, training, and recognition is essential to sustain motivation and enhance barangay-level governance. By investing in the empowerment of barangay workers, local government units and policymakers can ensure more resilient, responsive, and effective community service delivery, thereby advancing both grassroots development and national governance objectives.

V. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the results of the study, it is recommended that local government units and policymakers strengthen the motivation and effectiveness of barangay workers by institutionalizing recognition and appreciation programs, enhancing financial compensation, providing adequate resources, and expanding training opportunities. Regular recognition ceremonies, commendations, and public acknowledgments should be established to validate workers' contributions and sustain morale, while honoraria and allowances must be increased to reflect the workload and responsibilities they carry. Adequate provision of tools, medical kits, and communication devices is essential to improve efficiency and safety, complemented by continuous training modules on leadership, stress management, emergency response, and community organizing to build resilience and competence. Addressing workload distribution and promoting work-life balance through flexible scheduling, wellness programs, and psychosocial support will help mitigate stress and fatigue. Furthermore, structured career advancement pathways, including scholarships, certifications, and recognition of barangay service as valid experience for higher-level government positions, should be developed to encourage long-term engagement. Taken together, these measures highlight the need to balance intrinsic motivators such as civic duty, recognition, and fulfillment with extrinsic support systems, ensuring that barangay workers remain resilient, valued, and effective agents of grassroots governance.

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