



INCIDENCE OF ARTICLE 151: ITS PROPENSITY RATE IN TIMES OF PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to determine the propensity rate of Article 151 in times of pandemic, the common policies violated and the difficulties met by the police in the implementation of Community Quarantine policies. The researcher used a descriptive design of methodology by using a questionnaire-checklist. The respondents of the study were the Police Officers assigned at the Cabanatuan City Police Station. As can be deduced from the study, the common crimes committed was Resisting Authorities (Violations of Art. 151). As the government modified social interactions, the police implemented new safety measures. The changes brought some remarkable resistance to some individuals. Resistance to change is usual as we ask people to walk out from their comfort zones. The changes carried out some remarkable resistance to some people. With regard to the common community quarantine policies violated; the violations of city-wide night curfew is the most dominant. For the difficulties met by the Law Enforcers; vulnerable to physical and personal hazard such as the risk of getting infected as well as their families is the most significant. Police Officers are on the frontlines. Therefore, they are expected to earnestly implement the safety protocols. As such, a high-risk of exposure and contamination from the virus is very possible for the Law Enforcers.

KEYWORDS: *incidence, Article 151, Pandemic, Resisting Authorities*

I. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic exhibited new remarkable concern for acceptance and compliance to safety protocols in this time of the so called “new normal”. To get rid of the proliferation of the coronavirus, different protocols and guidelines are implemented.

In the Philippines, there are different Community Quarantine Guidelines depending on the severity of the widespread of the coronavirus in a certain place.

Community Quarantine is the restriction of movement within the area of quarantine of individuals in order to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 among persons and outside the affected area.

There are array of stay-at home orders implemented by the government of the Philippines through its Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID).

On the other hand, Law Enforcement leaders around the world are facing challenges in combating the contagious effect of the coronavirus. In this time of pandemic, police officers play a major part as compared to medical professionals in providing services to alleviate the boundless spread of the coronavirus.

Implementation of lockdown manifested to be a tough task worldwide as it adds up to change the way of life of every individual. As a result, police struggles to look ways and methods on how to carry out the

aforesaid such transition. Likewise, the constraint of locomotion of people turns out to be hard to impose since the lifestyle of every human changes into three hundred sixty degrees due to this pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown new unprecedented issues for compliance and community relations (Laufs & Waseen, 2020). Further, the pandemic related job role of police extends to the utilization of the police experience of crowd controls, public order management, investigation of criminal acts, deterrence of the law breaking behaviors and intelligence collection of anti-social activities. The acts of not obeying quarantine requirements, defying home stay or hospital stay, rules and concealing the contact history of those who catch the infection, have invoked essentially public health measures which require actions related to the domain of police experts.

There are complex issues associated with COVID-19 ranging from concerns about infringement of constitutional rights to potential sanctions for violations of an order (White & Fradella, 2020). As cases continue to rise, the government has ordered police to accompany medics and transfer any infected patients to isolation facilities.

In Cabanatuan City, due to this pandemic, it leads to enormous duress of police work. There are individuals who follow guidelines while some resist to this protocols. Those who violate the safety protocols will be charged of the violation of Article 151 of the Revised Penal Code. This law punishes unjustifiable



disobedience of lawful orders of persons in Authority or their Agents. Police officers or Law Enforcement agents are examples of Agents of persons in authority.

The researcher, as a resident of the said city, a faculty member and as a Criminologist affirm that there is a need to understand the Incidence of Article 151.

The purpose of this study is to determine the propensity rate of Article 151 in times of pandemic, the common policies violated and the difficulties met by the police in the Implementation of Community Quarantine policies. The results of this study will serve as a baseline to design some activities that can be used as part of the departments extension program.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study used of a descriptive research design. The specific problem number one of the study was answered through documentary analysis based from the record of the Cabanatuan City Crime Statistics.

Specific problems number two and three were answered through a questionnaire-checklist. The survey questionnaire was designed to find out the Common Community Quarantine policies violated and the difficulties met by the Police officers in the Implementation of Community Quarantine policies. The respondents of this study were the fifty police officers assigned at the Cabanatuan City Police Station.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1. Common crimes committed

Table 1. Common Crimes Committed

CRIMES COMMITTED	NO. OF CASES
Resisting Authorities (Art 151)	460
Laws on Reporting communicable disease	381
Anti-child Abuse	263
Anti-Gambling law	249
Anti-VAWC Act	179
Rape	196
Theft	145
Swidling (Estafa)	112
Physical Injury	104

3.2 Common Community quarantine policies violated

As reflected in table II, with regard to the Common Community Quarantine policies violated, the statement; violations of city-wide night curfew obtained the highest weighted mean of 3.64.

The respondents strongly agreed that violations of city-wide night curfew is the common community quarantine policies violated.

Due to the outbreak of the coronavirus, different measures in order to prevent the widespread of the virus was implemented. One of this is the implementation of curfew time. During the curfew time, no one was allowed to moved except the medical

Table 1 shows that Resisting Authorities is the top common crimes committed with 460 cases followed by Laws on Reporting communicable disease with 381 cases. The figure was based from the Cabanatuan City Crime Statistics from January 01, 2020 to December 31, 2020. The data proves that in times of pandemic due to the different guidelines implemented there are people who resist to follow safety protocols.

Following the World Health Organization (WHO) declaration of COVID-19 as a pandemic in March 2020, a state of emergency was announced in many countries. This has had significant impacts on individuals, communities and various systems-as a whole, locally, nationally and globally (Lee & Johnstone, 2020).

To quell the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, health authorities urged people to take easy-to implement precautions such as limiting social interactions, wearing a face covering and vaccinating. Many people complied, but some did not. Some of them distrusted the medical experts, some did not think of the virus would harm them (Forsyth, 2020).

Further, the present widespread of the coronavirus needed us to switch to our new way of life. While the government modified social interactions. The police carry out new safety measures. These changes brought some notable resistance to some people.

and nursing staff, police and the armed forces (Khatatbeth, 2020).

Likewise, the complete curfew promotes social distancing especially during night time. In order to fully implement this policy, Police officers were tasked to conduct checkpoints and monitor people who would violate the said policy. It has been observed that during the implementation, night curfew was commonly violated by some people.

However, the degree of conformity with the lockdown policies was probably affected the police responses. Law Enforcers are anticipated to implement these new restrictions. Due to low rates of citizens compliance it entailed negative contacts between the police and the people.



TABLE II. Common Community quarantine policies violated

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
1. Violations of city-wide night curfews.	3.64	Strongly Agree
2. Disobeying persons who are manning the checkpoints.	3.02	Agree
3. Persons pretending to carry essential goods in order to enter closed borders.	2.8	Disagree
4. Non-cooperation of persons or entities to report individuals infected by the virus.	2.8	Disagree
5. Organizing/Conducting social gatherings.	2.48	Disagree
6. Opening of businesses that are not allowed to operate.	2.3	Disagree
7. Conducting sports activities that are prohibited by law in times of pandemic.	2.66	Agree
8. Holding of religious services beyond the prescribe number of attendees.	3.22	Agree
9. Individuals who are not wearing face mask.	3.04	Agree
10. People who are not wearing proper face mask/face shield.	3.36	Strongly Agree

3.3 Difficulties met by the Law Enforcers

As can be inferred in table III, with regard to difficulties met by the law enforcers, the statement; Vulnerable to physical and personal hazard such as the risk of getting infected as well as their families obtained the highest weighted mean of 3.08.

The respondents agreed that vulnerable to physical and personal hazard such as the risk of getting infected as well as their families is the usual difficulty met by the law enforcers.

The police were proverbially put between a rock and a hard place even more so than normal by the

pandemic (Maskaly et al., 2021). Police officer health and well-being is, by the very nature of the profession, at increased risk compared to that of the general population (Hartley et al. 2011).

Law enforcement officers were tasked with enforcing policies in an environment of misunderstood risk (Stogner et al., 2020). Given the person-to-person spread of COVID-19 through respiratory droplets, law enforcement officers are at a heightened risk of exposure due to their close contact with members of the public (Jennings & Perez, 2020).

TABLE III. Difficulties met by the Law Enforcers

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Experience physical attacks while enforcing movement restraints.	2.56	Agree
2. Outrage of those who opposed to be hospitalized or quarantined as per health protocol.	2.54	Agree
3. Interface with infected people due to the virus while conducting inspection	2.46	Disagree
4. Accused of sexual harrasment while conducting movement control.	1.9	Strongly Disagree
5. Disregard of safety measures by citizens and policing efforts of the Law Enforcers.	2.64	Agree
6. Lack of rest.	2.94	Agree
7. Vulnerable to physical and personal hazard such as the risk of getting infected as well as their families.	3.08	Agree
8. Dealing with defiant people who are affected by the virus and resist to be isolated.	2.76	Agree
9. Distance from families and social networks.	2.9	Agree
10. Duress and occupational stress overload.	2.94	Agree

IV. CONCLUSION

As can be deduced from the study, the common crimes committed was Resisting Authorities (Violation of Art. 151). As the government modified social interactions, the police implemented new safety measures. The changes brought some remarkable resistance to some people. Resistance to change is usual, as we ask people to walk out from their comfort zones. With regard to the common community quarantine policies violated; the violations of city-wide night curfew is the most dominant. Curfew promotes social distancing. The conformity with the lockdown

requirements was very inevitable and this affects police actions. For the difficulties met by the Law Enforcers; vulnerable to physical and personal hazard such as the risk of getting infected as well as their families is the most significant. Police Officers are on the frontlines. They are expected to implement the safety protocols. As such, a high risk of exposure and contamination from the virus is very possible for the Law Enforcers.



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