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Sustaining the Fight against Insurgency: Workworld of CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) in Guihulngan City Negros Oriental

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Abstract. This study explored the experiences of the CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) in the fight against insurgency. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following: the positive and negative experiences of the informants; the problems encountered by the informants; and the aspirations of the informants during the fight against insurgency. This study is a qualitative type of inquiry using the transcendental phenomenological approach. This inquiry utilized ten (10) informants, and data were gathered from different detachments in different barangays of the city of Guihulngan. Using a validated interview guide with an open-ended question prepared by the researcher, four (4) of the informants were interviewed individually, and six (6) informants were interviewed during the focus group discussion. Thematic analysis was used to analyzed the data collected, identifying common themes and interpreting patterns of meaning or themes. Two themes summarized the positive experiences of the informants. They were: Work Fulfillment and Commitment to Community Safety. As to the negative experiences, the themes revealed were: Duty in the Face of Danger and Perseverance Despite Difficulties. The themes of Holistic Approach in the Performance of Duty, Spiritual Resiliency and Professionalism, and Teamwork addressed the problems encountered by the informants. The theme of Financial Security highlights the aspirations of the informants. Future studies should inquire into the level of awareness of the community regarding the duties and responsibilities of the CAA personnel.

Keywords: CAFGU Active Auxiliary; Financial Security; Insurgency; Policy Formulation; Work world

Introduction

Increasing globalization has contributed to the emergence of complex security challenges and exposed the limitations of states in effectively addressing insurgency. The development of contemporary insurgency has increasingly resembled a violent and competitive environment in which armed groups compete for power, influence, and resources. Insurgencies can generate adverse consequences beyond the immediate conflict, including regional destabilization, disruptions to resource distribution and market flows, the proliferation of transnational crime, humanitarian crises, and transnational terrorism. Consequently, insurgency is regarded as a significant threat to national security because of the evolving strategic contexts, organizational structures, and operational dynamics of contemporary insurgent movements (Metz, 2011).

The rapid advancement of science and technology has also facilitated new forms of terrorist and insurgent activity, requiring governments to continuously adapt their security strategies and operational capabilities. Various scholars have emphasized the importance of developing learning organizations among national security professionals by examining the strategic applications of technological capabilities, including hardware and software, to counter terrorism and its supporting networks. Although insurgency and terrorism are distinct phenomena, insurgent groups may employ terrorism alongside other forms of violence to achieve their political and strategic objectives. Consequently, the relationship between counterinsurgency and counterterrorism has become particularly significant in developing appropriate strategies, tactics, and policies to address evolving security threats (Forest, 2007).

Since the early twenty-first century, continuing conflicts across Africa, Asia, and the Middle East have demonstrated the persistence and adaptability of insurgent movements. The emergence and proliferation of insurgent organizations suggest that armed rebellion continues to be perceived by some groups as an effective

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means of gaining power and influence or bringing political and ideological causes to the attention of national and international communities. Furthermore, increasing economic and political interdependence among major states has complicated the unilateral pursuit of strategic objectives, while the difficulty of exercising effective government control over geographically dispersed areas has created opportunities for insurgent groups to operate and establish influence (Beckett, 2005).

These global developments demonstrate that contemporary insurgency is a multidimensional security challenge that cannot be addressed solely through conventional military operations or technological advancements. Although modern technologies and international counterterrorism strategies can strengthen intelligence gathering, surveillance, communication, and operational coordination, their effectiveness ultimately depends on how they are adapted to the specific political, geographical, and social conditions of individual states. This highlights the importance of translating broad counterinsurgency strategies into practical measures that respond to the realities of local communities, particularly in areas where insurgent groups seek to establish influence or challenge government authority.

In the Philippine context, these global security challenges are reflected in the government's continuing efforts to address internal security threats, particularly the communist insurgency. Insurgency remains a dynamic phenomenon, making it difficult to determine whether existing trends accurately predict the success or failure of government responses. The communist insurgency has historically presented a significant security challenge because of its organizational structure, nationwide reach, and efforts to establish support among local populations (Parlade, 2015).

The Philippines has experienced a long-standing communist insurgency primarily involving the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA), and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), which serves as its political alliance. The conflict began in the late 1960's and has persisted for decades, making it one of the world's longest-running communist insurgencies (Corpus, 1989). Its prolonged duration and geographical reach have required the Philippine government to develop counterinsurgency approaches that extend beyond national-level policymaking and conventional military operations. These approaches also require effective implementation in local communities, where terrain, community relationships, access to information, and the presence of government institutions can influence the conduct and outcomes of security operations.

At the local level, the implementation of counterinsurgency strategies depends partly on the capabilities and operational readiness of personnel deployed in communities affected by insurgency. While national security institutions establish strategic objectives and provide operational direction, local security forces perform assigned duties in specific areas of responsibility where familiarity with the terrain and understanding of community conditions can support security operations. This connection between national strategy and local implementation highlights the importance of auxiliary forces in supporting government efforts to maintain peace and security. In this regard, the CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) provides a relevant example of how broader counterinsurgency objectives are carried out within the Philippine local security environment.

The CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) serves as an auxiliary component of the Philippine government's counterinsurgency efforts, supporting the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in designated areas affected by internal security threats. Recruited from local communities, CAA personnel can contribute to territorial security, community protection, information gathering, and the safeguarding of government facilities within their assigned areas of responsibility. Their familiarity with local geography, community conditions, and the surrounding environment can provide operational advantages in supporting the AFP's security efforts. Depending on their training, authorization, and assigned responsibilities, CAA personnel may perform security patrols, perimeter protection, and other authorized support activities in areas affected by insurgency (Kraft, 2010).

The role of the CAA illustrates how national counterinsurgency strategies are translated into operational activities at the community level. While global developments in counterterrorism, intelligence, and technological innovation influence the broader security environment, the implementation of these strategies also relies on the preparedness, capabilities, coordination, and local knowledge of personnel operating on the ground. Thus, examining the CAA provides a micro-level perspective on the practical implementation of counterinsurgency measures in the Philippines. It also provides a basis for understanding how local security personnel contribute to national security objectives and how their operational experiences, challenges, and capabilities may influence the implementation of counterinsurgency efforts within their respective areas of responsibility.

Studying the lived experience of CAA is essential for understanding their contributions and limitations within the broader framework of national security, community dynamics, and counterinsurgency strategy. The researcher aims to explore and understand the range of experiences and challenges encountered by the CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) in the fight against insurgency. A comprehensive study of the experiences of the CAFGU

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Active Auxiliary (CAA) will significantly contribute to the Armed Forces of the Philippines, particularly the Philippine Army. This research aims to assess the current status, aspirations, and lived experiences of CAA members. Moreover, it seeks to identify existing challenges within the organization and provide evidence-based recommendations for improvement. The findings are expected to support improved operational standards and overall organizational effectiveness.

Research Questions

This study aimed to explore the work world of the CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) in the fight against insurgency in Guihulngan City, Negros Oriental.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the experiences of the informants in the fight against insurgency?
2. How do the informants address the problems encountered in the fight against insurgency?
3. What are the aspirations of the informants to improve their capabilities in the fight against insurgency?

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study explored the work world of the CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) deployed in various detachments within the City of Guihulngan, Negros Oriental. It focuses on their experiences, the problems they encountered, and their aspirations to improve their capabilities in the fight against insurgency. The study will select ten (10) participants based on their relevance to the research objectives and their willingness to share their experiences.

Literature Review

This qualitative research study was anchored in Anomie Theory by Durkheim (1897) and supported by Routine Activity Theory by Cohen & Felson (1979) and Deviant Place Theory by Siegel (2001).

Primarily, this study was anchored on Emile Durkheim (1897) Theory of Anomie. Anomie is described as the collapse of social norms that govern behavior. Anomie was coined by Durkheim and other sociological thinkers as a revolt toward, or withdrawal from, the social controls of society. All deviant behavior derives from a state of anomie; this occurs when norms are confused and unclear (Malik, H. & Malik, F., 2022). Anomie theory explains the breakdown of social bonds between individuals and their communities, often resulting from rapid or significant changes within a complex society. Such transformations can disrupt the shared norms and values that bind people together, especially when traditional ideas and sentiments are unconsciously diminished and gradually dispersed throughout the broader social structure. Emile Durkheim emphasized the importance of certain moral elements in maintaining social cohesion, particularly individual attachment to social groups and the cultivation of a collective spirit of discipline (Marks, 1974).

When these elements weaken, society becomes vulnerable to anomie, leading to increased social instability and individual disorientation. Crime is an inherent aspect of social life, present in all societies across time. According to Emile Durkheim (1933), crime plays a functional role by reinforcing social solidarity, as members of society unite in opposition to those who violate collective norms. He explored the consequences of the transition from traditional, small-scale rural communities characterized by what he termed mechanical solidarity to modern, industrialized societies marked by organic solidarity. This shift, brought about by urbanization, increased division of labor, and growing personal isolation, gave rise to structural changes that could lead to anomie, a state of normlessness or confusion regarding societal roles and expectations. In an anomic society, moral guidelines weaken, traditional values deteriorate, and individuals may experience disorientation or rebellion as a result of moral uncertainty and social instability (Marks, 1974). Understanding of nomos and anomie has stressed the need for direct social interaction at the various levels of social organization. In order, the institution will greatly enhance the conversation of the state and society; it will enable the people to follow the working of the government and also to communicate the result of their reflection to the organs of the government. It is not at all imperative that the contacts should be direct; they may be direct or indirect. He recognized that the state and society will work hand in hand and expand their functions and keep pace with whatever developments are going on in the deep layers of society. It brings all the societal tendencies into clear consciousness and elaborates them for the people, revealing the people to themselves (Marks, 1974).

This study was supported by the Routine Activity Theory of Cohen and Felson (1979). The theory seeks to explain the occurrence of crime events as the result of several circumstances. The theoretical perspectives of Routine Activity Theory have influenced our understanding of the importance of place in crime prevention efforts. It has three elements namely: first are the motivated offender with the capacity to commit a crime, the desirable target which serve as a victim, the target and the offender must be at the same place at the same time.

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There are three other types of controllers: the intimate handlers, the guardians, and the place managers. Intimate handlers are those people that has direct personal influence over an offender, the guardians are those people who can protect the target and the place managers are those people who took care of the place. Intimate handlers are people who have direct personal influence over an offender (such as parents, teachers, coaches, friends, or employers). In the presence of such people, potential offenders do not commit crimes. Most adults are away from intimate handlers for many hours of the day, and many offenders, both juvenile and adult, have few or no intimate handlers. The absence of these controllers might provide the opportunity for the potential offender to commit such crimes. For a crime to occur, such people must be absent, ineffective, or negligent. Most adults are away from intimate handlers for many hours of the day, and many offenders, both juvenile and adult, have few or no intimate handlers. Theories of crime can generally be divided into two categories: those that seek to explain the development of criminal offenders, and those that aim to understand the occurrence of criminal events. Historically, criminology has been dominated by offender-based theories, with most research focusing on why certain individuals commit crimes and how to prevent them from doing so. However, in recent years, there has been a growing shift toward examining the circumstances and contexts in which crimes occur, rather than solely the characteristics of those who commit them. This event-based perspective places greater emphasis on the role of location, making the concept of place central to understanding and preventing crime (Eck & Weisburd, 2015).

To understand the distribution of certain types of crime, it includes the multilevel approach of the routine activities approach. It was pointed out that a context for criminal opportunities exists at both the individual and environmental levels. Criminal acts, as actions involving force, fraud, and/or activities prohibited by law, are also concerned with predatory crime that occurs in public places (Wilcox et al., 2018).

This study was also supported by another theory of Deviant Place by Siegel (2001). This theory holds that victims do not motivate crime but rather are more likely to become victims because they live in social areas that are disorganized and contain high crime rates and therefore have the highest risk of coming into contact with criminals regardless of their lifestyle or behavior. The implication of the theory is to improve the physical and social conditions of the said deviant places. It is essential that in every housing project and safe city planning be parallel with the development of the spiritual aspect of the human being, as it relates to the victimization theory, which is the deviant place theory. Ensuring living areas have ample space for religious and community-based activities, and that venues that encourage vice should be banned. The aim is to ensure that criminal activities will be reduced due to the closeness of highly populated buildings (Hussin & Zawawi, 2012). There are areas that sometimes law enforcement and local norms seem to favor deviant activities. The concept of place should be included in the community process and social construction to evoke a communal deviant identity as a form of resistance to dominant norms. One of the features in constructing the place within the community is to consider the ideology in which the beliefs and myths that form the basis of community solidarity (Cross, 2011). The development of subcultures supports many types of deviance. It can foster deviant or criminal motivation and occurs in different areas in a city. The inappropriate environment and delinquency of the residents have an effect on the opportunity and vulnerability to crime (Roncek, 1981).

The Philippine government battles against communist insurgents, and a context of high crime and a poorly functioning criminal justice system has opened up space for an ample number of armed groups to emerge. The government has continuously aimed to quell the insurgency through various military and socio-economic programs. However, the CPP-NPA-NDF have managed to persist, particularly in rural areas where poverty and social inequalities remain prevalent (Santos, 2010). Sec. 4 of the Philippine 1987 Constitution states that the prime duty of the Government is to serve and protect the people. The Government may call upon the people to defend the State and, in the fulfillment thereof, all citizens may be required, under conditions provided by law, to render personal, military or civil service. These include more than one million civilians who have been recruited into official auxiliary groups by the Armed Forces of the Philippines. This transformed all citizens into potential or volunteer reservists, organized into geographical units, and mandated a training program to bolster their ability to address national security threats. The country's security forces are overstretched and are heavily reliant on auxiliary forces.

The concept of the CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) is supposed to be based on the citizen armed force mandated by the 1987 Philippine Constitution. Republic Act 7077, also known as the AFP Reservist Act of 1991, makes the CAA an integral part of the AFP reserve force. It is integrated into the military chain of command and is subject to all applicable military laws, rules, and regulations. Like other members of the military reserve force, CAA members receive formal basic military training. The CAA is a paramilitary organization of the Philippine Army mostly their detachments are situated at the rural barangays; they are the one who conduct preliminary roving operation in their respected area of responsibility to strengthen the visibility of Armed Forces and building community relations as well. They assist community development activities and campaign against threats in the locality and help the AFP in the delivery of services to the community. They are put under the direct operational control and supervision of a commanding officer of the AFP, usually the commander of

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the maneuver battalion assigned to a particular geographic area (Kraft, 2010). Over the course of the conflict, thousands of civilians across generations have taken up arms to support the government's counterinsurgency campaign. CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) and other pro-government militias have played a crucial auxiliary role in combating insurgent forces and enhancing community security. In the Philippines, militias function as third-party armed actors, distinct from both rebel groups and the primary state security forces. The CAA, in particular, serves as a pro-government militia that provides auxiliary support to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), assisting in counterinsurgency operations and helping to maintain stability in conflict-affected areas (Zech & Eastin, 2023).

In understanding the complex issue of global insurgency, it is also important to acknowledge the harmful nature of known organizations like Al Qaeda and the Taliban. Al Qaeda undeniably contributed to the growth of global insurgency through various means, including providing financial and logistical support to existing insurgent groups, offering training in combat and bomb-making tactics, and inspiring individuals and groups to take up arms through their extremist ideology and propaganda. Al Qaeda influences and propagates the Salafi Jihad ideology to the Ummah and networks dispersed elements of the Salafi Jihad movement. This contribution illuminates the numerous factors responsible for the rise of insurgencies worldwide, including political deprivation of legal rights, economic inequality, and state repression. Attributing the entirety of global insurgency to Al Qaeda would be a misrepresentation and hinder efforts to address the root causes of these complex conflicts (Shultz, 2008). Another group was the Taliban and their multifaceted role in the global landscape. While not directly participating in insurgencies beyond Afghanistan, the Taliban's historical actions and current state raise concerns regarding their potential contribution to global insurgency. The Taliban has strong ties with al-Qaeda, a notorious terrorist organization, which indirectly facilitated global acts of violence and extremism. They threaten the democratic institutions and citizens' rights of the Afghan people. Therefore, while the Taliban's influence shouldn't be dismissed entirely, it is necessary to analyze their role within the broader context of global insurgency, avoiding oversimplification and acknowledging their complex position (Maizland & Laub, 2021).

In responding to global insurgency, the United States made a joint resolution to use different forces against terrorists. Different paramilitaries have been employed globally to combat insurgencies; their effectiveness against specific groups like Al Qaeda and the Taliban is a complex and contested issue. The Northern Alliance, also known as the Lion of the Panjshir, Ethnic Pashtun Anti-Taliban Force, and the Afghan Militias are the paramilitaries that have become an auxiliary force to the United States Special Forces, who fight the Taliban and Al Qaeda. Burhanuddin Rabbani, an Afghan politician, leader of Jamiat-e-Islami, and former President of Afghanistan before 2001, while the Taliban arose against his government. He formed a military coalition (Northern Alliance) against the Taliban and later changed it to the National Resistance Front of Afghanistan, which was headed by the National Hero of Afghanistan, Ahmad Shah Massoud, who was killed in 2001 before Al-Qaeda attacked the World Trade Center in America. The leader of the alliance worked closely with the international coalition, particularly the United States, in efforts to stabilize and secure Afghanistan and collaborated with foreign military forces, coordinated operations, and supported counterinsurgency efforts. The forces played a crucial role in the ground campaign against the Taliban (Shams, 2023).

Ethnic Pashtun Anti-Taliban Force rose when repeated attacks on mosques scared away many, and its social value is seriously affected by militancy. There have been many attacks on mosques in which hundreds of people have been killed. Taliban violated these norms, as they even targeted women and children in the markets and educational institutions (Wasai & Bano, 2019). Afghan Militias that were trained by small teams of the American Special Forces, they help the local community of the Afghan in arming tribal militia to threaten and their development make the Taliban most fear (Bergen, 2011).

Southeast Asia is also experiencing threats from the continuous evolution of different terrorist groups. The Jemaah Islamiyah and the Daulah Islamiyah are the militant organizations operating in the different regions of Southeast Asia. The Malay Muslim Militants in Thailand were Thahan Phran, composed of villagers in full-time and part-time defense units, and the Civilian-Police-Military Task Force, who fight against these terrorists (Chambers & Jitpiromsri, 2022). The Front Pembela Islam in Indonesia, where domestic intelligence is involved in gathering intelligence reports due to the continued existence of security threats, especially from terrorist and separatist groups. Intelligence reform was seen as crucial to increase intelligence capability to prevent terrorist and separatist attacks. Even in relation to civil-military relations, intelligence, particularly the State Intelligence Agency or Badan Intelijen Negara (Sadadi, 2020).

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front and Communist Party of the Philippines–New People's Army in the Philippines, in which CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) are involved in the fight against insurgency (Chalk et al., 2009). The legacy of Japanese withdrawal and colonial collapse following World War II similarly led to the embedding of localized militia-based forces and utilization of state-sponsored militias in the Philippines and neighboring regions (Ahram, 2011).

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Paramilitaries can play supportive roles by providing intelligence, securing areas, and assisting state forces in direct engagement. This can augment conventional military capabilities and prove strategically beneficial in specific situations. However, their effectiveness is often hampered by limitations. Paramilitaries often lack the rigorous training and discipline of regular forces, increasing the risk of human rights violations, civilian casualties, and the alienation of local populations, which can inadvertently fuel the very insurgency they aim to suppress. Therefore, the use of paramilitaries against specific insurgent groups requires a rigid approach that carefully weighs the potential benefits against the significant drawbacks. Upholding human rights, addressing the root causes of the insurgency, and prioritizing long-term solutions alongside any use of armed forces, including paramilitaries, remain crucial for achieving sustainable peace (Shultz, 2008).

Militias function as force multipliers that enhance the capabilities and legitimacy of regular armed forces in combating rebel movements. In countries such as Sudan and Sierra Leone, pro-government militias played vital roles in supporting government forces during civil wars. In Sudan, the government institutionalized its allied militias through the Popular Defense Forces Act of 1989, which formally recognized them as auxiliaries to the national army. These militias, often organized and financed by the state, became a central component of Sudan's war strategy against rebel groups. Though diverse in composition and operating under various names depending on their regions, they share a strong dependence on government support. Using militias proved to be one of the most cost-effective and efficient methods for suppressing rebellions, demonstrating their crucial role in the overall military strategies of both Sudan and Sierra Leone (Ndiaye, 2024).

The use of militias in warfare has deep historical roots, originating in the colonial era when they served imperial interests and continuing through the Cold War as proxies for the Soviet Union and the United States in their ideological rivalry. In contemporary Middle Eastern conflicts, militias have again become vital instruments for regional and global powers seeking to advance strategic and ideological objectives. Their local knowledge of geography, culture, and social dynamics, combined with their low operational costs, makes them effective alternatives to conventional armies. As a result, the deployment of militias has become a key strategy in addressing modern irregular threats such as terrorism, insurgency, urban combat, and drug trafficking (Mirza & Mushtaq, 2021).

In the nineteenth century, Prussia became the leading model for the modern citizen army, inspired by Enlightenment ideals that promoted a new relationship between citizens and the state through shared military service. The success of Prussia's citizen army, particularly in defeating Napoleon, demonstrated its effectiveness and influenced military reforms across Europe. While liberals viewed the system as a means to empower citizens and strengthen national unity, conservatives feared it would undermine aristocratic authority and weaken state control. Nevertheless, the Prussian king endorsed the reforms, recognizing the importance of fostering patriotism and collective identity. This shift transformed how leaders perceived armed citizens, not as a threat of revolt, but as a vital source of military strength and civic engagement (Avant, 2000).

To reduce the expenses of suppressing rebellions, governments often turn to civilian self-defense militias composed of residents to help safeguard their communities from rebel threats. These groups, commonly called self-defense forces, are organized to defend themselves and their property against insurgent attacks. States view such locally based militias as effective and practical instruments of counterinsurgency, providing additional security support while minimizing the costs and burdens on regular armed forces (Estancona et al., 2019).

Following the ouster of President Marcos, the 1987 Constitution was established to restore democracy and reaffirm civilian supremacy, leading to the creation of the CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA). Tasked primarily with perimeter defense, CAA members patrol communities and provide intelligence support in areas cleared of insurgents. These CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) members are carefully vetted, subjected to human rights screening, and operate under the direct supervision of the Philippine Army. Like regular soldiers, they undergo mandatory human rights training and are held accountable for violations. Although the military's overall size has not increased, the government began funding these community-based paramilitary forces in 1987 as part of its counterinsurgency strategy, and the CAA remains a legitimate and integral component of that framework today (Hall, 2018).

When Duterte ran for president in 2016, his campaign held up Davao City as "Exhibit A" proof-of-concept of his "iron fist" approach and an example of what the country could become under his rule. The message resonated with an electorate frustrated by the prior Aquino administration's selective and slow-moving reform agenda (Thompson, 2016). This is how Duterte addressed the issues of continuous and growing terrorism. The major premise is that the various armed groups, regardless of their politics and purpose, are involved in the drug trade, and this includes the CPP-NPA-NDF (Oreta, 2022). During a meeting of the Provincial Peace and Order Council (PPOC), the inter-agency body that coordinates security efforts among provincial officials, the AFP, the PNP, municipal mayors, and other government agencies, AFP representatives proposed the establishment of two CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) detachments in Sagada, Mountain Province.

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Citing reports of rebel sightings, they argued that deploying CAFGU units, which function as auxiliary paramilitary forces supporting the AFP's counterinsurgency operations, would strengthen local security and help address insurgency-related concerns in the municipality (Macaspac, 2018).

The CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) was created by the AFP to serve as a local reserve force that could be expanded in times of invasion, rebellion, or major security threats, while also supporting government forces in maintaining peace and order, aiding disaster relief, and assisting in socio-economic activities. Organized within specific localities, CAA are composed of regular soldiers and qualified civilian reservists, with two main categories: the Inactive CAA, which represents most members and remains on standby status, and the Active Auxiliary, the volunteer militiamen commonly known as CAA who directly support AFP operations. A military directive also created the Special Active Auxiliary, whose members are funded by private employers. The AFP promotes CAA as a cost-effective security measure that supplements the military, highlighting the advantage of community-based forces who know the terrain, can perform local defense and guard duties, and allow regular troops to focus on combat missions, an approach supported by Defense Secretary Ramos, who emphasized that effective community defense is strongest when it comes from within the community itself (Ross, 1990).

The CAA's were principally created to hold areas after the military cleared them of insurgent troops. CAA's mandates would stay within the community to contain and suppress an insurgency and defend the barangays as holding forces. They secure vital facilities, public utilities, intelligence collection, public information drives, and community development activities. The army has 80,000 troops, and this is not considered enough to cover the entire archipelago. Therefore, CAA represents a critical addition of security personnel. The CAA, who are technically "volunteers," are not subject to stringent selection procedures and lengthy, detailed training. In addition, there is a tendency to attract inappropriate characters to its ranks. Another concern is that since they receive no benefits such as a pension, the incentive for sustained good behavior is limited (Buchanan et al., 2011).

The CAA paramilitary unit was placed under the Philippine Army and was issued firearms; at present, CAA has a total strength of 53,432 members organized into 567 CAFGU active auxiliary companies all over the country. Each CAA is expected to provide service for 15 days per month, as it was supposed to be an add-on community service to the regular work or income source of the individual. Security is a public good, and the state is generally expected to provide this good to its constituents. However, the complexity of the threat landscape has necessitated that citizens actively participate in security management. Citizen participation in security governance has been practiced in many countries largely due to the fact that security institutions, particularly the military and police, are not sufficient, or the locals are more knowledgeable about the terrain and cultures of the place. Armed groups and militias often recruit members through family and kinship ties, including from the state-sponsored CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) based in local communities (Oreta, 2022).

The post-World War II government encouraged recruitment and arming of civilian guards to augment government forces in the fight against communist insurgents. These civilian guards would later transform into Barrio Self Defense Units, the precursor of the current paramilitary group, CAA. This shows that a community-level defense unit has always been part of the state-building process in the Philippines. Armed groups gain legitimacy because of the assistance they provide to government security forces and because they fill the gap in security services in community settings (Kraft, 2010).

Furthermore, the study would fill in the gap in other related studies conducted by different researchers, both local and international, to address other factors that affect the effectiveness and commitment of the CAA. The researcher reviewed various related literature and studies in order to fill in the gap in the study. In Espino (2004), the study included how the CAAs are trained and the assessment of their skills in winning the counterinsurgency. The right operational direction was included by utilizing paramilitary forces for village defense and as the protectors of the people, performed by the government, especially the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Reyes (2019) explored the activities of the civilians who are granted the privilege to possess firearms. The researcher of this study examines the functions of civilians bringing firearms under the supervision of the Philippine National Police and the Armed Forces of the Philippines. It includes the activities of conducting checkpoints, recruitment and training, and the issuance of firearms.

Another study by Zech & Eastin (2021) examined the factors that influence decisions to join the CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA), as well as their implications for sustained participation and counterinsurgency strategy. As a result, the majority of the members were heads of the family, who serve as breadwinners. Money or benefits motivate them most to join the CAA because some of them experience limited employment opportunities. Service might improve the lives of CAA members and their families by providing them with a consistent source of income. This is especially important in rural areas where agricultural production is becoming increasingly inconsistent due to climate change and inequalities in land ownership and access, and where the only viable alternative is labor migration. In the study by Zech & Eastin (2023), the CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) is examined in terms of how they view insurgents, politicians, state security forces, and

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civilians based on their experiences serving in the group. The survey results indicate the need for improvement in building trust between CAA and civilians as part of counterinsurgency strategy. Despite CAA contributions to public safety, their interactions with civilians are not always positive, and the poor treatment of CAA at the hands of AFP soldiers and local politicians can also cast them in a negative light. As a CAA, they see themselves as soldiers on the front line in the defense of the nation, as security providers to make the community a safer place, sacrificing their lives even at risk.

Furthermore, because the CAA is situated in places where rebels are present, the opportunity for violent acts such as killing and harassment of the detachment and personnel occurs by chance. A military report said that the members of the Leonardo Panaligan Command (LPC) opened fire at the CAA detachment. Members of the New People's Army (NPA) allegedly harassed a CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) Patrol Base in Barangay Sandayao, Guihulngan City, on Thursday evening, March 19, 2020. The government troops then retaliated and returned fire towards the direction of the New People's Army (NPA), who were positioned around 250 meters from the patrol base (Baesa, 2020).

Cortes & Comendador (2013), in their study they examine the success factors used in the province of Bohol to end the conflict and its applicability to the Colombian internal conflict. By having a comparison in the other achievement and successful peace process could help the country on how they approach when it comes to insurgency. The peace accord in Bohol, Philippines, stands out as a remarkable example, as it successfully brought an end to the province's insurgency. This model is now being adopted in other regions of the Philippines and shows potential for application in Colombia, given the similarities in the conflicts faced by both countries. In the past, Bohol was a stronghold of communist insurgency, fueled by poverty, insecurity, and various social problems. The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) continued its counterinsurgency efforts, including deploying CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) in military operations. This initiative was modeled after the United States Armed Forces' low-intensity conflict strategy using a proxy war approach. The paramilitary CAA units were tasked with blocking communist forces from regrouping and reestablishing their presence in rural areas following large-scale military offensives. As a result, the tourism industry was boosted and contributed to economic development. Communist leaders surrendered and many of its rebel members returned back to the government availing its programs and benefits.

Waddington (2022) his article notes that the CAA, as an organization, lacks a unifying ideology or identity that firmly links it to the Philippine state. Its members have long had access to firearms, and oversight remains questionable due to a lengthy and often corrupt chain of command. Nevertheless, since its establishment in 1987, the CAA has consistently fought alongside government forces against both the ideologically driven New People's Army (NPA) and the ethno-religious secessionist Moro movements. Stephan (1989), in his article on the counterinsurgency in the Philippines, stated that after the guerrillas and their support structures are neutralized, the SOT shifts its focus toward establishing a sustainable, community-based security force to maintain long-term peace and stability. This force, known as the CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA), is composed of carefully selected village residents who receive enhanced training to ensure they can effectively safeguard their own community. Alongside this capacity-building effort, key local development initiatives are launched to strengthen socio-economic resilience and reduce the likelihood of insurgent influence returning. Once the CAA is fully trained and development projects are progressing, the SOT withdraws from the village, leaving only one or two advisers behind to begin similar operations in other areas affected by communist insurgency, thereby extending the cycle of community empowerment and security.

Rubin (2020), in an interview about his research, highlights a particularly common strategy for holding NPA personnel accountable: communities utilized existing mechanisms for collective action, specifically traditional tribal leadership structures, to form state-supported civil defense forces such as the CAA. By providing funding, weapons, and training to help communities organize these paramilitary units in the post-Marcos period, the government significantly strengthened local "outside options," giving residents viable security alternatives to reliance on the NPA. Even in areas where these armed community units did not directly expand government control, the presence of CAA's improved local self-reliance in security provision and, in turn, enhanced the community's bargaining power in dealing with NPA members. This testimony underscores the crucial role of state capacity in shaping how a community's ability to mobilize collectively influences the NPA's success or failure in establishing territorial dominance.

To understand the work world of the CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA), the researcher conducted an inquiry or investigation to explore and examine more about their experiences beyond their official functions. In this manner, the researcher could discuss all the information and valuable insights gathered during the implementation of the study. Furthermore, the researcher fully discourses the importance of the civilian involvement in resolving armed conflict especially areas that are affected of insurgency either communist or terrorist. The study included the gathering of different experiences that could contribute to the long-term sustainability of the informants in their fight against insurgency; their challenges and aspirations were added

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to the thorough investigations. Additionally, the study investigated on how the informants interacts with their communities and their understanding in relation of social dynamic to the national security.

In conclusion, sustaining the fight against insurgency through the work of the CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) requires a balanced approach that recognizes their vital role in maintaining peace and security, while addressing the socio-economic, operational, and moral challenges they face. As frontliners in counterinsurgency operations, CAA members serve as both protectors of communities and strategic partners of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, preventing insurgent resurgence in vulnerable areas. Ensuring their effectiveness demands continuous capacity-building, adequate logistical and welfare support, and policies that promote human rights and community trust. By strengthening the operational readiness and well-being of the CAA, the government can reinforce long-term stability, protect democratic gains, and foster lasting peace in conflict-affected regions.

Methodology

Research Design

Qualitative research methods are a superior means for conducting meaningful research in criminology and criminal justice. Qualitative research is a research approach that provides in-depth insights into individuals' experiences, perceptions, and perspectives. It employs data collection methods such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and observations to gain a deeper understanding of human experiences and social phenomena (Tewksbury, 2009). Qualitative researchers seek to understand how individuals interpret and make sense of their experiences within a specific context and at a particular point in time. This approach examines how reality is constructed and understood by exploring questions about the nature of reality, how it is experienced, and how individuals assign meaning to their experiences (Merriam, 2002). Specifically, the researcher adopted the transcendental phenomenology research design as a way of understanding and conducting qualitative research. In the field of criminal justice, the use of transcendental phenomenology is applied and aims to investigate the structures of consciousness and the essence of human experience. It aims to uncover the conditions of possibility for the structures of consciousness that make experience itself possible. Transcendental phenomenology seeks to understand how consciousness is structured and relates to the world, often delving into questions of intentionality, meaning, and the nature of reality (Husserl, 1970). In this study, the researcher fully understands that transcendental phenomenological research design explores the work world of the citizen-armed forces geographical unit in the fight against insurgency, and the research focuses on what and how questions to comprehend their experiences and explore complex phenomena.

Research Locale

The study was conducted at Guihulngan City, Negros Oriental, with a land area of 38,856 hectares. The City of Guihulngan is divided into thirty-three (33) barangays, and most of the barangays are situated in the mountainous area, which gives reason for putting up an auxiliary forces' detachment in selected communities. Specifically, the study includes three (3) detachments which are all spread in areas of Guihulngan City. The first detachment was the Garces Patrol Base located at Brgy. Villegas, Guihulngan City. The troop experienced three instances of harassment and two encounters that resulted in the death of two CAA members, including John Doe Garces, where the Villegas Patrol Base changed to Garces Patrol Base. The second encounter, initiated by twelve active members of CAA together with the 62IB led by Lt. Col. William Pesase, 62nd IB commanding officer, happened on November 21, 2022 (Partlow, 2022). The second detachment was the Hinakpan Patrol Base located at Brgy. Hinakpan, Guihulngan City. This detachment experienced three encounters and six instances of harassment. As a result of the violence perpetrated by the communist group, it was recorded that one of their troops was shot dead by the Special Partisan Unit (SPARU) assassins of the communist rebels. The third detachment was the Balogo Patrol Base located at Brgy. Balogo, Guihulngan City. The detachment identifies seven instances of harassment, and a one the troop is a survivor of the assassin team or the Special Partisan Unit of the communist rebels. During the preliminary inquiry, the detachment has not yet experienced an encounter. However, in every encounter intercepted by the Hinakpan Patrol Base, this Balogo Patrol Base would serve as a blocking force in every possible exit of the enemy. Guihulngan is one hundred sixty-one (161) kilometers away from Dumaguete City, the provincial capital of Negros Oriental. The adjacent municipality to the north is the Municipality of Vallehermoso and the adjacent municipality to the south is the Municipality of La Libertad, in the west in the Municipality of Isabela, Negros Occidental and Taňon Straight in the east.

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Research Participants

The informants of this study were members of the CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) deployed in various detachments within the City of Guihulngan, Negros Oriental. A total of ten (10) informants were purposively selected based on their membership status, willingness, and relevant experiences in performing their duties as CAA members. The selection of these informants was guided by the need to obtain rich, relevant, and firsthand accounts that would provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon being investigated. Given the qualitative nature of the study, the informants were selected not for statistical representation but for their ability to provide meaningful insights based on their actual experiences and involvement in security-related activities within their respective areas of responsibility. The data-gathering process was divided into two sets. The first set consisted of four (4) informants who participated in the In-Depth Individual Interview (IDI). Two (2) informants were assigned to Hinakpan Patrol Base, while the other two (2) were assigned to Balogo Patrol Base. The IDI was employed to allow each informant to share personal experiences, perceptions, and insights in a more detailed and confidential setting. This approach was considered appropriate because individual interviews provide opportunities to explore sensitive experiences, personal reflections, and specific incidents that informants may be less comfortable discussing in a group setting. The second set consisted of six (6) informants from Garces Patrol Base who participated in the Focus Group Discussion (FGD). This method was utilized to encourage interaction among the informants and to identify shared experiences, common perceptions, and differing viewpoints regarding their duties, challenges, and encounters within their respective areas of responsibility. The FGD complemented the individual interviews by providing an opportunity to examine how participants collectively understood and interpreted their experiences as CAA members. The informants were selected based on the following inclusion criteria: (a) they must be active members of the CAA; (b) they have the willingness to participate voluntarily in interviews; and (c) they have direct experience of the challenges and demands associated with CAA duties.

Research Instrument

The study used a semi-structured interview guide that addresses the specific sub-problems. The questions are open-ended in order to get in-depth information, abundant data, and to obtain more significant information, and do not tend to use or rely on questionnaires (Cresswell, 2013). Part I of the interview guide deals with the positive and negative experiences of the informants in the fight against insurgency; part II delves into the problem encounter in the fight against insurgency; part III inquires' into the aspirations of the informants to improve their capabilities in the fight against terrorism. The panel validated the interview guide questions, and the researcher submitted them to the ethics committee for approval. The researcher utilized an audio recorder during the interview to ensure accurate transcription, complemented by note-taking as a supplementary record.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher conducted a preliminary inquiry to the different CAA detachments to get the name of the addressee for the construction of the transmittal letter. After the transmittal was signed by the adviser and the Dean of the Graduate School, the researcher immediately proceeded to the CAA detachment. The researcher decided to visit the Battalion Headquarters for the approval of the request to conduct the study. The request was approved and forwarded to the review ethics committee for approval to conduct the interview. The data gathering is through in-depth interviews, and the researcher is sure that the informants will always be willing to participate in the investigation or interview. And during the collection of data researcher were going to adjust the time of informants especially in the conduct of interview. The researcher would need to adopt their free time and make sure that the informants are always willing to share their experiences. In analyzing the data, the researcher would not rely only on one question; the researcher would ask follow-up questions to gather more information and to come up with a good analysis of the research. The researcher used thematic analysis, a method for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns of meaning or themes in qualitative data (Clarke & Braun, 2017). In this manner, the researcher may identify common experiences, and it requires skill in interviewing or investigating the informants to come up with data that is common to all. It includes self-observation, written or visual content of a document, and recorded narratives from interviews with the consent of the informants. The researcher transcribed the recordings of the four (4) In-Depth Individual Interviews (IDI) and the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) involving six (6) informants. The transcripts were read and reread to gain a comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences, perceptions, and accounts. Initial observations and significant statements relevant to the research questions were noted. Transcripts were systematically examined and assigned short labels, known as codes, to meaningful statements related to the research questions. Codes represented relevant experiences, actions, perceptions, challenges, and responses described by the informants. Coding was conducted across both individual interviews and the focus group discussion. Related codes were compared and grouped according to similarities, relationships, and

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shared meanings. These groups were examined to determine broader patterns relevant to the research objectives. The researcher reviewed the preliminary themes against the coded excerpts and the complete dataset. Codes and themes were reassessed to ensure that the grouped statements shared a coherent meaning and adequately represented the informants' accounts. Themes that overlapped were refined or combined, while those lacking sufficient support or relevance were revised or removed. Each theme was clearly defined by identifying its central idea, scope, and relationship to the research questions. Appropriate names were assigned to communicate the essential meaning of each theme. Subthemes were also established when necessary to organize distinct but related aspects of a broader pattern. The final themes were presented in a coherent narrative, supported by carefully selected verbatim statements from the informants. The findings were interpreted in relation to the research questions, relevant literature, and the study's objectives. Quotations were anonymized to protect the identities and safety of the informants.

Results and Discussions

Research Question 1: What are the experiences of the informants in the fight against insurgency?

The data are divided into three parts in accordance with the statement of the problem. It includes (1) experiences of the informants in the fight against insurgency; (2) addressing the problems encountered by the informants in the fight against insurgency; and (3) aspirations of the informants to improve their capabilities in the fight against insurgency. The researcher who utilized the transcendental phenomenological study seriously delved into the information from the individual in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. To understand the nature of the experiences of the informants, the researcher systematically and comprehensively analyzed all the data gathered. After all the analysis, the researcher arrived at different emergent themes that were developed from the significant statements of each informant. It was formulated and constructed with the corresponding meaning. The researcher constructed eight (8) emergent themes from the positive and negative experiences, the problems that they have encountered, and the aspirations of the informants in the fight against insurgency. The indications below are the following themes that answer the sub-problem:

Experiences of the Informants in the Fight Against Insurgency

Positive Experiences
1. Work Fulfillment
2. Commitment to Community Safety

Negative Experiences
1. Duty in the Face of Danger
2. Perseverance Despite Difficulties

Addressing the Problems Encountered by the Informants in the Fight Against Insurgency
1. Holistic Approach in the Performance of Duty
2. Spiritual Resiliency
3. Professionalism and Teamwork

Aspirations of the Informants to Improve their Capabilities in the Fight Against Insurgency
1. Financial Security

Experiences of the Informants in the Fight Against Insurgency

By dropping all the results of the gathered data and information from the different informants, the researcher came up with their positive and negative experiences as a CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA). In sustaining the fight against insurgency, it involves a life-threatening experience, but because of the love and dedication of their work, all members need to have self-determination. The different responses produce emergent themes that describe their experiences in the fight against insurgency.

Positive Experiences

These are the experiences of the CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) that give them inspiration and motivation to work. The results of these experiences would make them more productive and effective in their duties and responsibilities. These are the following positive experiences:

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Work Fulfillment

This theme emerged based on the statement provided by the informants that if you are engaged in the Armed Forces, there is no such thing as desperation. The contentment of their work brings them motivation to stay in the Armed Forces. Informant 1 from the in-depth interview stated that:

Wala nakoy pangandoy kay gulang nako. Kontento raku sir, kay maayo raman jud ni ang akong trabaho (IDI1:SS8). (I have no desire anymore because I am old already. I am satisfied, sir, because my work is good enough).

In another view, according to Informant 4 from the in-depth interview, he wants to join the force not only to serve, but because it is near their house. It is very convenient to work when they are near their family. He said:

Kontento ra gyod ko sir labi nah du.ol ra akoang balay, matagaan rapud ko nila ug mga sideline. Unya dili gihapon ta mu kumpyansa aning mga tawhana(rebelde) ky traydor nang silang pagkatawo. Ang mga pumoloyo kinahanglan makumbinsi nimu, kay kining mga pumoloyo musugid man jud na nimu. Kontento ra man ko aning serbisyoha, sir (IDI4:SS32). I'm really satisfied, Sir, especially since it's close to my house and in return for my service I receive honorarium as my extra income. Then as usual, we don't trust these people (rebels) because they are traitors. We have to convince the villagers, because these villagers will tell us. I am satisfied with this service, Sir.

Informant 9 from the focus group discussion said that to sustain life, we must be content with what we have. And he said:

Dili ta makasugakod ug di makontento (FGD5:SS58). (We cannot survive if we are not content with what we have).

Similarly, Informant 8 from the focus group discussion also added to his statement that being a person full of contentment in life would make him persevere in the service. He said:

Kung di makontento dili kaabot usa ka tuig (FGD4:SS57). (If you are not satisfied, it will not take you up to one year in the service as CAA).

Now, therefore, the researcher understands that each member of the CAA should have contentment in life while they are serving in the community or among the villagers.

2. Commitment to Community Safety. Being a member of the CAA, they are willing to give up their life for the sake of the common good of the community. Because he believed in his heart that they served as the protector of the villagers and the country.

According to Informant 2 from the in-depth interview, they need to work voluntarily to protect the community. And with this, the community would experience peace and order by avoiding these communist insurgents. He said that:

Tungod para dili masamok ni atong lugar, boluntaryo kami ga depensa sa atong lugar, para dili lang makasulod ang insurgency ba (IDI2:SS14). (So that no conflicts arise in our community, we voluntarily defend our area, so that we can avoid insurgency).

Informant 3 from the in-depth interview explained that it makes him feel better in the moment he serves our countrymen, especially in the internal security operation in defending the government from lawlessness. He said:

Nindot man ang CAFGU sir kay para makatabang ta sa atong goberno nga depensahan atong barangay gud, dili masudlan ug lain nga mga tawo pud (IDI3:SS25). (Working as a CAFGU is good, Sir, because we can help our government by giving security to the villagers, so that lawless people can't penetrate).

And lastly, according to Informant 4 from the in-depth interview, he is joining CAA to protect their village. He stated that by his service, he can help in controlling the growth of the rebels. He said that:

Mag-CAFGU ko kay aron kining niang mga tawhana (rebelde) mapugngan ni nga dili makapenetrate dili makakuha ug masa. Kay ang akong hunahuna kini niang mga tawhana(rebelde) ug magpawala ra gyod ta, pananglitan ron dili ta makigbisog nila, kini niang pumoloyo tanan makumbinsi na nila. Pangayo-an na ka ug mga binulan, pangayo.an kag bugas, ug dili maka muhatag ron nga dilikado tripan ka ug patyon ka (IDI4:SS33). I will join CAFGU because these people (rebels) can be prevented from penetrating and gaining mass. I think these people (rebels) have the opportunity to do extortion if we don't get rid of them; for example, if we don't fight against them, they would gain sympathy from the villagers. They asked for monthly payments for revolutionary tax; they asked for food, and if they could not give it, they would threaten the villagers and even kill them.

Informant 5 from the focus group discussion emphasized that, as a CAA member, they experience a sense of fulfillment in serving the community and are committed to continuing their role in providing protection and helping eliminate terrorist rebels; he said that:

Sa akong pagsulod bilang CAA, nakita nako ang kamaayo sa CAFGU. Bisan gamay ang sweldo apan nakabinipisyo gihapon sa pamilya. Sa akong kinabuhi nagpadayon ko para maka protektar pud ko sa mga kauban, hilabi na pud sa mga katawhan, nga mawala na ang mga dautan nga tawo o element aron dili

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masudlan ang mga barangay. Ani-a ra gihapon ko nagpadayon para sa kalinaw sa maong barangay. Sa civilian paku sa wala paku nisulod ani, wala man koy kontra gyud nya sa diha na nga nabal-an naku nga usa diay ko giduot, mismo akong mga pamilya naku, nga ako usa ko sa kuluhaon ko sa armadong kusog (NPA) maong nisulod ko ani. Wala nakoy nakuyaw sa diha naku sa serbisyo. Lami jud ang Armed Forces kai madepensahan man ta (FGD1:SS43). (When I entered as CAA, I saw the goodness of CAA. Although the salary is low, it still benefits my family. In my life, I will continue so that I can also protect my colleagues, especially the people, so that evil people or bad elements will disappear so that they cannot penetrate the barangays. I want to continue for the peace of the barangay. Since I was a civilian, I have no enemy but by the time that I was one of the targets of the rebels (NPA) I decided to join the Armed Forces. I was in no danger when I was in the service. The Armed Forces are good because they can defend us). The researcher again realized that working as a CAA, you need to have the spirit of patriotism so that you can perform your duty wholeheartedly.

Negative Experiences

Aside from those positive experiences, CAA members also encountered negative experiences along with their duties. They sometimes involved challenges, obstacles, and even a life-threatening event. These are the following negative experiences:

Duty in the Face of Danger

In connection with the purpose and objective of the study, I myself inquired about the informants' different experiences as members of CAA. And it was uncovered that they are more on conducting patrol operation in which they might be under threat and had a chance to encounter the terrorists. In response to the routine duty, most of them experienced different forms of unpleasant emotions and threats. The following are the significant statements based on the response of the informants. According to Informant 1 from the in-depth interview, he discloses that:

Ang akoa gyod nga kasinatian isip CAFGU labi kay nakaagi man gyod ko ug engkwentro, dili jud sayon tinuora ang away, perti gyod lisura, kamang jud, hapa jud hapa, perti jud paita, dili basta ang away sa pusil. Ako jud nasinatian sa akong trabaho,dili basta basta matag buto sa pusil nagdala man ug kamatayon. Pero mawala ug makapabuto ka sa pusil, pag-aso ana sa pusil kay naka buto na nya matimahu-an nimu mawala imung kakulba, hinuon murag malingaw naka. Bisan gyod gani tinuora ingon ana karon nga sulongon me dre kay dili man jud kalikayan ning detachment adunay man jud musolong sa permiro ana kulbaan gyod ka, kapila nami harasa. Naka agi naku og encounter ug harass, dili kalikayan ang kakulba ang uban gani mukurog. Dili man gyod kalikayan naa man jud ga operate nga naunhan gyod sila ug paboto. Dili gyod sayon ang pagsundalo (IDI1:SS1). (My real experience as a CAFGU is especially because I have been through an encounter, the fight is not easy, it's really rough, it involves crawling, it's hard, it's hard, it's not just a fight with a gun. I have experienced in my work, and just that every gunshot brings death. But the fear loses if you can fire the gun and smell gun smokes that has been fired, we can tell that your nervousness will go away, but it seems like you are having fun. Even if it is true that it's going to be attacked by the enemy, harassment of detachments is inevitable, and at first, you can't help but feel nervous, wondering how many times you will face such threats and encounters. I've personally experienced both harassment and armed encounters, and the fear is natural. Some even tremble from the anxiety. Ambushes during operations are not uncommon. Truly, being a soldier is not easy).

According to Informant 4 from the in-depth interview, as a CAA member, he believes that they cannot avoid the enemy in times of duty or in every operation. He stated that these rebels are doing propaganda movements to make the villagers believe in their ideology. He said:

Maayo jud nga nakasulod me aning CAFGU sir kay kining niang amu gyod nga tinguha nga tabang jud ta sa mga tawo sa mga pumuloyo, tabang sa barangay nga dili makumbinsi bitaw sa pikas. Abi nimu kana naa gud mga tawhana ang ilaha propaganda nga maayo gyod sila ba. Pananglitan ron, kung wala ning mga CAFGU, walay detachment diri, perti na daghanan mga masa diri, mga pumoluyo guro halos-halos masa na. Kay imung hunahunaon naa ka serbisyo, naa ka aning serbisyoha, ang imung hunahuna manirbisyo ka ani naa jud kay kontra (IDI4:SS31). It's good that I joined CAFGU, Sir, because we really want to help the people of the village, help the barangay to refrain from supporting these people (rebels). These people having propaganda that known to be good and they are right but not. For example, if there were no CAFGU's, there would be no detachment, and there would be almost a lot of masses; this village will be infiltrated. As we continue our service, we always think that we are an enemy.

Another response of Informant 1 from the in-depth interview mentioned that being also a CAA is not easy, sometimes it will make you experience life threating event. He stated that all they need to do is be vigilant. He stated that:

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Ang ako lang gyod ikasulti, pag-amping pag.ampo aron dili ta duol sa disgrasya. Ang ako ra jud dire sa among detachment wala man me problema, gi-ingnan rami sa amoang labaw kinahanglan nga mag-amping, dili man gani me pa lag laagon ug layo. Mao akong gi-ingon nga dinhi sa kinabuhi tinuora sa among trabaho CAFGU dili gyod angayan nga magpasayasaya kay dinhing trabaho.a dili jud kalikayan, aduna jud kontra (IDI1:SS9). (All I can say is, be careful and pray so that we don't end up losing our lives. Here in our detachment, we don't have any problem, all we need to do is to have extra careful and do not go too far as our commander reminds us always. As I have said, our work as a CAFGU you need to be vigilant because it is inevitable that anytime there will be an enemy).

It is also the same with the response of Informant 8 from the focus group discussion that he experienced in his duty, in which they have been harassed. Through their experience of harassment, the fear inside of them is present, but they need to be strong enough to fight the enemy. He added:

Atong unang pagharrash dre, kulba man jud ning pagharrash kay kadaiya man lang ning buto pero pagkahuman,kulba gihapon kung makapabotu na murag manginit imung lawas di naka mabition ug kahadlok. Mao raman nay koan nya sa CAFGU wa may pagsaway ani sa trabaho. Kay dili man pud ka kita sa imung pamilya ug adto ka sa layo (FGD4:SS46). The first time the enemy harass us, it was nervous because it was just a lot of shots, but after that, the nervous is still there but when we fired, it was like your body was getting hot and you couldn't feel fear anymore. That's how CAFGU is; I have no criticism of my work. Because your family will not be with you if you work in very far places.

The researcher comprehends that to be a member of the CAA; it faces challenges that sometimes threaten their life too. And being a force multiplier of the Armed Forces of the Philippines is not an easy job.

Perseverance Despite Difficulties

This theme emerged as the researcher continually analyzed the experiences of the informant. Informant 4 from the in-depth interview stated that sometimes he can feel a little bit dismayed if they make an accomplishment and receive nothing of any appreciation and recognition from the headquarters. He said that:

Maka dismaya sir ning magserbesyo ta bilang CAFGU kanang naang labi na maka-operate nya dayon maka kuha ka ug info e relay man sa companya labi na positive nga info unta naa madawat o pahalipayan ang detachment ba nga nakascore. Kanang naang madugay ma.abot ang allowance (IDI4:SS35). As a CAFGU, Sir, it is very disappointing when we can gather positive information in relation to the activity of the enemy, and we receive no credit or any monetary reward from the company. Also, I feel dismayed if the release of our allowance is delayed.

Another response from Informant 3 stated that even if they encounter hardships and obstacles, they continue to help serve the government. He disclosed that:

Sa akoang pagduty kay tabang mani sa atong gobyerno nga dili pud masudlan sa mga dautan mga tawo pud, atoang depensahan. Normal naa jud ang kalisod, dili malikayan gyod nga wala man ta kaila anang mga tawo nga uban gud. Gi-harass me gipaluparan, naa ang kakuyaw kay bala nagud nah (IDI3:SS23). My primary responsibility is to assist the government in safeguarding the community by preventing the entry of individuals who pose a threat to public safety. It is our duty to defend and uphold peace and order. Challenges are to be expected in this line of work, particularly given the uncertainty of identifying potential threats. We frequently experience harassment, and feelings of anxiety are understandable, as our lives are constantly placed at risk due to these ongoing security threats.

Additionally, Informant 5 articulated a sense of concern for his family during periods of supply shortages, indicating that such instances heighten his emotional burden. He emphasized that one of the key sources of dissatisfaction among personnel arises when their families' basic needs are unmet due to financial limitations. This highlights the intersection between occupational challenges and personal well-being, particularly in relation to economic strain. He added:

Magu.ol jud ko sir samot na ug mahotdan na ug konsumu sa pamilya. Concentrate ra sa pakiggubat bahalag mangaungas, dili man ko negatibo nga pagkatawo (FGD1:SS61). (I'm going to be sad, Sir, if it's getting worse and I'm going to run out of food for the family. But still, we concentrate on fighting whatever comes up; I'm not a negative person).

The researcher understands that even though the CAA members are known to have a spirit of bravery and courage, they still sometimes experience discouragement in their daily lives.

Research Question 2: How do the informants address the problems encountered in the fight against insurgency?

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Addressing the Problems Encountered by the Informants in the Fight Against Insurgency

Holistic Approach in the Performance of Duty

This emergent theme was revealed based on the responses of the different informants. Informant 1 said that community participation has a great part in their duty. He confirmed that working in unity can help in the achievement of their goals. He stated:

Sa amoang trabaho sir dili man jud ingon nga kami mu direct, kung dili naa may mga sibilyan nga makasugid, gamit sila. Usa pami musolod kung pananglit naa amoang nakuha gikan sa mga sibilyan. Amo na clearing og naa bay tawo nga katingalahan. Kung magparehas na ang info, kana siguro na nga anha sila verifyon (IDI1:SS6). In our work, Sir, it is not like we are direct; if there are civilians who can tell us, we use them. Before we penetrate, we will verify the said report if there is anything we got from the civilians. We conduct clearing operations when there is a suspected individual. If the intelligence information aligns with existing reports, the identity of the individual is likely to be verified.

According to Informant 3 from the in-depth interview, it is better to work hand in hand with the community in maintaining security. He also stretched here to be vigilant and don't take for granted on the possible moves and tactics of the enemy. He said:

Dili jud muhatag ug kompyansa kay wala man ta kabalo sa atoa kalaban basig naa sila ga abang na sila diha. Muna nga presence of mind kay wala man ta kabalo ug naa ba sila o wala. Kanang mga sibilyan sir mao na ang mga BIN ba o informant makatabang nato makasugid na sila ug naa silay mga tawo makit.an nga dili kaila. Bulahan ug naa sila matingad-an makasugid na sila nimu nga naa jud niagi nga mga tawo nga dili me kaila (IDI3:SS27). (We always consider our safety because we don't know our enemy; maybe they are already there. First, presence of mind because we don't know if they are there or not. Those civilians, Sir, are they the BIN's or Barangay Intelligence Network or informants; they help us stay informed if there are suspicious people in the area, especially if they see people that are new to their eyes and they know nothing about the person).

Furthermore, Informant 2 from the in-depth interview states that the use of proactive measures is one of the effective solutions in the fight against insurgency. This statement provides the importance of having a mutual relationship with the villagers or community. He said:

Ang solusyon ragyod diha mukuha kag mga tawo nga makakita ana nila ingon nga pwede makatext pwede ka pahibalo lang ka asa sila, mao nay importante diha ang pagkuha nimu ug informant, nga maayo-ayohon lang jud nimu ang mga sibilyan parang matagaan kag mga report kay kung kontrahon gud nimu o bati ka nila dili pud tagaan ana nila, katabang nimu na sila kung ayohon pud. Ang pagpatrol para clearing sa area, para dili pud sila ka penetrate pud dili ka plastar. Kung naa ka sa serbisyo maayo ka sa kumunidad (IDI2:SS17). The best solution is to get people who can identify suspicious persons to report to the troops through text and inform them where they are. That is why it is very important to have a civilian informant as a source of intelligence reports. It is important to maintain good relations with civilians, as their trust is essential for obtaining reliable information. If they feel hostility or resentment toward us, they are unlikely to share valuable intelligence. Therefore, we consistently strive to treat them with respect and kindness. Regular patrols are also conducted to secure the area, prevent enemy infiltration, and restrict their access. Being in service requires us to remain committed to fostering strong community relations.

Another statement disclosed by Informant 7 from the focused group discussion that being a member of CAA, you would have a strong connection with the community. He states that one of his motivations in working in CAA is to help the villagers themselves. He added:

Ang naghatag nakog kadasig sir kana ragyod koan ra sir makatabang ta sa atong barangay. Makatabang sa barangay bisag gamay ra ug allowance, makatabang pud ta sa atong nasud (FGD3:SS51). (What gives me motivation, Sir, is that we can help our barangay. We can help the barangay even with a small allowance; we can also help our country).

Lastly, according to Informant 5 from the focus group discussion, another solution that fits best against insurgency is to maintain community engagement. Having the foot patrol operation is one way of gaining a good relationship with the villagers. He added:

Patrol sa area sa palibot labi na sa masa, pasabot sa masa nga mubalik loob sa goberno. Labi na gyod sir sa pag-ampo sa Ginoo usa man gyod na nga ang mga tawo di ta mu abusar, ato sila tagaan ug idea nga makahunahuna sila ug surrender kay ug di nimu tagaan ug idea ug imu gyud pugson magwala man pud na sila, ang maayo pakig-istoryahanay nga dili maaayo nga sudlon nimu nang naa diha kay wala kay makuha. Naanad na lang mi ana nga mga terrain. Mahayag na madugay ang ngitngit, Makaya na lang, sir, basta naa ka sa combatan. Kanang naa sa palibot masa nato na sila (FGD1:SS66). (Foot patrol in the area, especially to the pro terrorist or masses people; tell the masses to return to the government. And the most important thing, Sir, is to pray to the Lord that we will not abuse people; we will give them an idea so that they can think of surrendering, because if you do not give them an idea and you force them to give up, the more they

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will react. We will bring them into a good conversation that is not good to enter into, because you have nothing to gain. And also, I'm just used to those terrains; it's been dark for a long time. Sir, you can handle it as long as you're in combat. It is good if all surrounding communities are pro-government.

Spiritual Resiliency

It is said that prayer is the strongest weapon of every human being. Specifically, every soldier working in the Armed Forces would always keep communicating with God in the form of prayer. Informant 3 from the in-depth interview believes in his full dependence on God. He said:

Mintras mulakaw mugikan sir mag.ampo gyod daan nga ilayo sa mga tawong dautan (IDI3:SS29). (Before we walk away, Sir, pray first to stay away from bad people).

According to Informant 1 from the in-depth interview, in the conduct of foot patrol operations, he always thinks of his safety and protection that come from God's hand. The statements confirmed that in their duty, they need Divine protection from God. He said that:

Naa ra gihapon ang kakuyaw gyod tinuora, naka agi ko re-enforce sa engkwentro, kaagi jud ko mismo engkwentro gyod pero ah! Ang kahadlok naa gyod ang kahadlok, mubati jud ka ug kahadlok, gisayonan ka nga matag buto sa pusil nagdala ug kamatayon, monang naa nga ako gyod gihunahuna nga mag.ampo nalang gyod ta sa Ginoo. Akoang gyod gihunahuna nga magsalig ta sa pusil may pusil man pud atong kontra muna ato nalang kuanon nga ang Ginoo nalang jud ang mag.igo sa tanan. Daku jud ug kabahin ang pag.ampo, kinhanglan ta mag.ampo. Mao bitaw akong ingon sa mga batan.on, ayaw mu pagsalig sa pusil kay ako gulang na musulti gyod ko sa tinood labaw jud sa tanan mag.ampo jud ta sa Ginoo kay kining atong kinabuhi galatay sa usa ka lugas lanot (IDI1:SS3). The danger is still there; of course, I was able to reinforce the encounter. I have been through the encounter myself, but ah! The fear is there; you feel fear, as you are told that every gunshot brings death. That's why I really thought that we should just pray to the Lord. I really think that we should not rely on the gun. Our enemy also has a gun. Praying is a big part and important; we need to pray. That's what I say to the young people: don't trust the gun because I'm old already; I'll tell you the truth. Above all, let's pray to the Lord because our life is only one.

As a supplement to the above statement, Informant 2 from the in-depth interview expressed the importance of faith and prayer. His statement reaffirmed that one must have God first before doing such foot patrol operations. He said:

Ang importante ang number one gyud diha sa pagikan jud nimu mag-ampo jud ka gyod, may Ginoo ka sa imung kinabuhi. Number one jud nimu Siya nga mao gyod nay number one depensa gyod nimu sa imung kaugalingon nga makatabang nimu ang atong Amahan ra gyod, kay kung wala ka diha dili jud ka magdugay kung wala kay Ginoo sa imung kinabuhi (IDI2:SS16). (The number one important thing is that you really pray; you have a Lord in your life. He is our number one who is our number one defend to ourselves that only our Father can help us, because if you are not there, you will not live long without the Lord in your life).

Another statement was disclosed by Informant 1 from the in-depth interview in which he reaffirmed the importance of prayer and seeking God in times of trouble. Informant explained that if there's no God, they can do nothing but die in the midst of the said encounter with the enemy. He said:

Diha me ka engkwentro jud nga kadto mao naka-ingon jud ko nga ug wala pay Ginoo murag tudas na. Grabe man jud to kay kampo man jud to among gisulong. Dinhi sa akong serbisyo ang ako ra gyod gi-ingon sa gasunod naku, ayaw mu pagpaturagas kay alampo.on ni atong trabaho, dili pasayasaya ug ang mahinungdanon ubanan nato ug pag-ampo kay diha panalipdan ta (IDI1:SS5). (It was during that encounter that I said that if there is no God, we are nothing. It's bad because it's the camp we attacked. Here in my service, I only said to my followers, don't let your guard down because this is our job, don't make fun of it, and the important thing is to accompany it with a prayer because that's where we will be protected).

Other statements are additional disclosures from Informant 1 from the in-depth interview; the statement below shows the spirit of bravery and courage that, whatever happened, they need to fight for the sake of their service to the community and to the country. He added:

Wala, sukol ra gyod ko kay sa akong pagserbisyo ang ako lang jud gihunahuna ubanan lang jud naku siya ug pag.ampo. Kay di man gud bastabasta kay kini gud trabaho.a gamay sipyat tikwang jud ka. Wala man pud hinoon nga gi.abot ko ug problema, kaguol, wala raman, ang ako lang gyod nga ang Ginoo mag-uban ra jud siya naku (IDI1:SS4). I am fully committed to confronting the threats that come with my service. In doing so, I rely on my faith, consistently seeking the Lord's guidance and praying for protection. This line of work is not easy, as it constantly endangers our lives. Despite the risks, I do not dwell on problems or sadness; my only desire is for the Lord to remain with me throughout my service.

Finally, this last statement of Informant 9 confirmed that belief in God is necessary, and the most important thing is to never forget to pray in everything we do. He stated that:

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O, nakakuyog ko ato. Natural man jud na siguro; naa man tay kakulba, pero ug magpadala ka sa imong kakulba, nimo diha naman pud ka madisgrasya pud. Dili kalikayan ang kakulba; naa jud na. Ang importante lang jud dili ka padala sa imong kahadlok kay siyempre mamatay man pud ta padala ta ana, abante lang jud…Ang pag-ampo sa Ginoo jud koan jud sya numero uno jud na sya (FGD5:SS47). Yes, I was present during the encounter. It is natural to feel nervous in such situations; however, allowing fear to take control can lead to failure or even disgrace. While fear is inevitable, it is crucial not to be overwhelmed by it. As soldiers, we understand the risks, including the possibility of death, but we must remain composed and focused. For me, prayer is my primary source of strength; turning to the Lord is my top priority in moments of danger.

The researcher understands that, in believing God, all things are possible, even the impossible things in a soldier's life. Everybody should bear in mind that it is impossible with man, but with God nothing is impossible.

Professionalism and Teamwork

The basis of this emerging theme was the informants' response that they perform their work professionally. Informants stated that discipline in every operation is badly needed, following all commands from the team leader. Informant 1 from the in-depth interview said that:

Hinayhinay lang gyod me sa paglakaw nga dili me madetikan, kinalanglan hilum jud wala olo-istorya, sinyas tanan labi na ug Ranger ang amoang detachment commander wa jud tingog tingog sinyas ra. Tiil kinto jud aron lang jud walay banha (IDI1:SS7). (I just walked slowly so that I wouldn't be detected. I was very quiet and didn't talk; everyone was signaling, especially our detachment commander, who is a Ranger, didn't make a sound, just a signal. Making every single step silent.

According to Informant 2 from the in-depth interview, teamwork and collaboration with colleagues are very important in the field of duty. The informant here expresses that oneness in performing a task would have gained better success in their daily routine work. He said:

Ang pagtinabangay ragyod, mao ragyod na diha number one (IDI2:SS19). (Working together is the number one priority).

Additionally, according to Informant 4 from the in-depth interview that to be safe and secure in times of conducting operation everybody should have presence of mind. The informant explains that focus and self-discipline should always be kept in mind by every soldier. He said:

Focus gyod, ibutang sa huna-huna nga kining nia pwede naay kalaban, possible positive, dapat active perme imung hunahuna kai kung mu-ingon ka nga negative possible man ka magrelax (IDI4:SS37). (Focus should be put in the mind that this job can have an opponent, possibly positive; you should always be active in your mind; if you say that it is negative, it is possible that you will relax).

Lastly, Informant 8 from the focus group discussion stated that as an active member of CAA, you need to be vigilant always. And you don't need to be strict in convincing the masses to be back in favor of the government. He said:

Ang nindot lang gyod himuon para dili pud sila makahunahuna ug panulong ug detachment ug para mobalik na sila sa sabakan sa gobyerno, amigohon lang gyod nato na sila ang mga sibilyan, kana sibilyan sila man gud na mudesisyon, siyempre masa ug imu na strictohon ron mao mana mudoot nimo, dapat amigohon lang gyod na mga sibilyan para pud malikay pud ta sa kagubot. Kung magpatrolya permi gyod, kang maghunahuna nga naa jud kontra (FGD4:SS68). The only good thing to do so that they will not be able to think of harassing the detachment and so that they will return to the government, let's make them friends with the civilians; they are the civilians who will decide, of course, the masses, and if you are strict with them, they will not help you. That's why we need to make friends with the civilians; we should be friends with civilians so that we can avoid chaos. When patrolling, you should always think that there is an enemy and have presence of mind. Therefore, the researcher concluded that even though the members of the CAA don't have the highest degree, they would perform their job with dedication and professionalism as well as teamwork and collaboration.

Research Question 3: What are the aspirations of the informants to improve their capabilities in the fight against insurgency?

Aspirations of the Informants to Improve their Capabilities in the Fight Against Insurgency

Financial Security

This theme derives from the responses of those informants who have aspirations when it comes to the improvement of their capabilities. According to Informant 4 from the in-depth interview stated that they are

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hoping for an increase of allowance because most of them their family are dependent on their income from the armed forces and has no other source of income. He stated that:

Akong pangandoy sa personal naku sir makauswag, makadawat sa allowance maka pa skwela sa mga bata, makapalit tag bugas. Ang mga pumoloyo tanan maatoa, kay kining nia gud nga mao mana sinugdanan nga makapenetrate katong mga armado naa pajud silay masa ba makuha nila (IDI4:SS39). (My personal wish, Sir, is to be able to progress, to receive the allowance, to be able to send the children to school, to be able to buy rice. The surrounding community is in favor of us, because it all starts with the penetration of rebels to the mass supporters if they can convince the civilians).

Informant 2 of the individual interview disclosed that he experiences inadequacy and shortage, especially in finances, because of a small allowance and honorarium; he stated that:

Naa man jud usahay ma apekhan ka, pero consentrate ra gihapon sa trabaho, naa jud panahon ma.abtan ka sa apiki. Kay kulang baya gyod ang allowance ug mao jud saligan namu jud. Wala mi anang desperado, hunahunaon jud nimu ang trabaho. Idiya nimu diha mangita lang ka idiya nga dili ka maunsa (IDI2:SS15). (Sometimes we experience a shortage in budget, but we still have concentration in work. There will be times short of budget, because the allowance is not enough if we rely on it. I'm not that desperate; let's think about the work. We find ways and just look for an idea so that you will not be harmed and survive.

According to Informant 5 from the focus group discussion, it would be better if there were an increase in their allowances. The informant's aspiration is not only for himself but for the entire unit of CAA in Guihulngan City. He said that:

Pangandoy naku nga mu.uswag ang among allowance, mapun-an unta ug dili lang para dre amoa kun dili abot jud sa kinatibok.an, maayo unta ma-aprobahan sa AFP (FGD1:SS70). (It is my wish that our allowance will increase; it should be added and not just for us but also to the entire unit. It would be good if the AFP would approve it).

Similarly, Informant 6 from the focus group discussion added that the only thing that he aspires to is the increase of their monthly allowance. He said:

Ang amo lang gipangayo sa Ginoo nga uswagan gyod unta ang amoang monthly allowance, mao ra gyod na amoang pangandoy sir sa amoang kinabuhi jud. Bahin ug gubat sir dili gyod pud me mudagan, amoa man jud pud nang pakamatyan, mao na gud na ang gipanumpaan namu sir (FGD2:SS72). (The only thing we are asking from the Lord is that our monthly allowance should be increased; that is our wish, Sir, in our life. In terms of war, Sir, we will not run; we are willing to die; that is what we have sworn, Sir).

According to Informant 8 from the focused group discussion that they need some increased of allowance for financial stability. He said:

Ang akoang pangandoy sir nga mas bintaha man jud kung mauswagan ang allowance sir, maka sustain pud sa pagskwela sa atong anak (FGD4:SS73). (My wish, Sir, is that it would be more advantageous if the allowance is improved, Sir, so that we can sustain our child's schooling).

And Informant 10 from the focus group discussion added that, if possible, there's an increase to their allowance. He said:

Mas maayo unta nga mapun.an o madungagan ang allowance. Bisag gamay lang ba. Malo.oy sila ba (FGD6:SS60). (It would be better if the allowance were added or increased. Even if it's just a little bit. If they want and are willing).

Finally, Informant 6 from the focused group discussion discloses that they experience in service, receiving a small amount of compensation until now. He added:

Pero kung malu.oy gyod sila sa CAFGU, syempre bisag mao rani ang CAFGU part raman gihapon sa sundalo, mao raman gihapong kinabuhi.a,among na.agian tag 30 ang adlaw 900 ang bulan, muna nga agwanta ragyod (FGD2:SS59). (But if they are really willing to help more to CAFGU, of course, even though CAFGU is still part of the soldier, it's still the same life. We were accustomed to receiving an allowance of 30 per day or 900 a month, but we sustained).

This study was conducted by the researcher through the use of the transcendental phenomenological research design under the qualitative research method (Husserl, 1970). Accordingly, after uncovering to the different experiences or the work world of the CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) there are eight (8) emergent themes arises. And also, this study was anchored on three theories, first is the Anomie Theory by Durkheim (1897) and supported by Routine Activity Theory by Cohen & Felson (1979) and Deviant Place Theory by Siegel (2001).

Anomie Theory considers the existence of normlessness; when a social system is in a state of anomie, common values are no longer understood, and it can cause chaos. A society that experiences moral uncertainty may become confused and rebellious. And this was supported by Routine Activity Theory in which the proponent argues that crime in a society occurs due to the different factors that triggered the commission of the crime, these factors include suitable target, motivated offender and absence of guardian. And third is the Deviant Place Theory; this refers to the infected environment that is prone to be the nest of criminals or

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offenders because it gives them opportunity in the commission of the crime. Individual resides in deviant places are prone to be a victim.

Experiences of the Informants in the Fight Against Insurgency

Positive Experiences

Work Fulfillment

In this theme, the informants express their satisfaction in performing duties and responsibilities. This theme describes a positive experience of the informants during their fight against insurgency. The theme shows the contentment of the informants with where they are engaged in their work. The theme also describes the job satisfaction of the informants, even though they only received a small amount of compensation from the government as an honorarium and allowances.

The theme was supported by Vroom's Expectancy Theory, which defines motivation as a process governing choice among alternative forms of voluntary activities, a process controlled by the individual. People generally prefer certain goals or outcomes over others, anticipating feelings of satisfaction when these desired outcomes are achieved (Vroom et al., 2015). The relation of the theory to the study is that informants voluntarily present themselves to be a member of the unit. In return for their service, they would receive monetary compensation, rewards, and other benefits.

This theme was also supported by Aziri (2011) conclude in his study that there is a considerable impact of the employees' perceptions for the nature of his work and the level of overall job satisfaction. Financial compensation has a great impact on the overall job satisfaction of employees.

This theme was supported by Islam & Alam (2014), who suggested that a decline in job satisfaction leads to an intention to stay or quit. The study investigated that employees' satisfaction is based on the environmental conditions and organizational support; it includes recognition, social acceptance, and relation to their passion and ambition.

Furthermore, this theme was supported by the study of Lavalekar (2016) in which in his study stated that most of the respondents expressed their satisfaction with respect to the material gains from the job examples are salary and allowances, various economic/financial provisions etc. They do admit that there are better-paying jobs than this but also mention that their payments are in proportion to their educational qualifications and sometimes even better than what they would have received otherwise in outside civil work fronts. They understand the importance of saving for the future and are actively working on it. Very few mention that the salaries are not at par and are dissatisfied with it.

Another study that supports the theme is the study of Lawler & Suttle (1973), in which remuneration, rewards, training, promotions, and work environment motivate and give satisfaction to a person.

In the Armed Forces of the Philippines, specifically the CAA are receiving only small amount of salary and allowances but still some civilians want to join as a member of CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) not only for the sake of the salary but for preservation of their village against communist or terrorist groups. Some of them are motivated to work as CAA due to lack of education and has no degree finished. There were also informants who said they don't want to work far from their families.

Commitment to Community Safety

The emergent theme highlights the dedication of the informants to their work. The informants understand the nature of their duties, in which they show willingness and volunteerism in community service. The theme is also in line with the motto of the Philippine Army that states Serving the People, Securing the Land.

The theme supported by Anomie Theory by Durkheim (1897) because crime is rampant in areas that has the absence of laws or norms, people who resides creates social solidarity to opposed the violators of the standards and norms within the society. In relation to the study, informants were hired from the local village to give security to the villagers as an implication of the complex issues.

This theme can be paralleled to the Routine Activity Theory by Cohen & Felson (1979), in which one of its controllers focuses on the concept of guardianship. The guardians are those people who can protect the desirable target of violence. Crime happens if one of the controllers is absent because, in this theory, it consists of three types of controllers to prevent the occurrence of crime: the intimate handlers, the guardians, and the place manager.

Another study that supports this theme was the study of Dasgupta (2009); in his study, he elaborates on the role and description of paramilitaries. The recruitment of paramilitaries from local allies to fight against insurgency and recognizing them as winning in different civil wars. One of their roles is to support the government to access local knowledge.

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Gutierrez (2008), in his article, discussed the rise of the paramilitaries to fight against terrorists and rebels; it's because of the economic and political conflict. They join the organization because they are driven and motivated economically.

Galgano (2013) states in his book the importance of military geography. The military must have full knowledge and understanding of the character of the area, especially the people surrounding the said geographic areas.

The paramilitary forces in the Philippines need proper training as well as command and control in order to make these paramilitary forces effective counterinsurgency forces. The CAA's primary mission is to defend the villages from insurgents' attacks and to prevent the re-entry of the insurgents into the villages. This thesis concludes that the Philippine government and the AFP are headed in the right operational direction for utilizing paramilitary forces for village defense and as the protectors of the people (Espino, 2004).

Also supported by the study of Zech & Eastin (2023), a relatively strong sense of national identity suggests that CAA members, like those in regular armed forces in the Philippines and elsewhere, might find motivation to protect their community out of a sense of civic duty and express a sense of pride in service.

Negative Experiences

Duty in the Face of Danger

This theme is a reflection of the experiences of every informant, in which being a CAA requires dedication and courage to face challenges, especially in the field of duty. Sometimes their lives are put in danger. Because they don't even know who are their enemy and yet they are known and identified by them.

The factors of Routine Activity Theory by Cohen & Felson (1979) are applicable on this theme, specifically, in relation to be a suitable target that sometimes they become a victim of the crimes. Because of risks in the geographical area CAA members are prone to be victimized, chapter 1 presents some scenario on incident where informants became a victim.

Another theory that supports this theme was the Deviant Place Theory by Siegel (2001) that states individuals who live in a deteriorated environment or deviant places were more likely encounter deviant behavior and criminals that has the opportunity to commit crime. The informant of the study was situated in rural areas where they would become vulnerable to victimization (Azumah et al., 2020)

This theme is also supported by the study of Pratt (1997) by understanding the historical origin of dangerousness, and it must begin with the understanding of the risk itself.

According to Beck, risk is the systematic way of dealing with hazards and insecurities. The further explanation of this risk is that fears and insecurities would develop into a risk society in which the government would provide protection from the risk (Higgins & Natalier, 2004).

This emergent theme can also be supported by the study of Bartone (2006), which notes the real physical dangers and threats that are often present in the deployed environment, threats that can result in injury or death. Things like bullets, mines, bombs, or other hazards in the deployed setting are included here, as well as the risk of accidents, disease, and exposure to toxic substances. In current U.S. and coalition operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, this includes many hidden dangers such as suicide bombers, snipers, and improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

Common sense in the work was introduced to the newcomers by the senior officer to be vigilant toward personal security while off duty to handle dangerous situations. They should possess expertise and knowledge on how to survive both combat situations and maintain personal security. Increased vigilance for signs of danger (Brewer, 1990).

In the Philippines, CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) are experiencing threats from the NPA and even the Muslim secessionist group that infiltrates the country (Espino, 2004). There are different reports that CAA life is in danger and sometimes results in their deaths. The bullet-riddled vehicle carrying the militiamen that gunmen ambushed in a secluded area in Barangay East in Marogong, Lanao del Sur (Unson, 2024).

Perseverance Despite Difficulties

This emergent theme encompasses the responses disclosed by the different informants involved in the study; it states that even though they encounter hard times and tough challenges, they are committed to pursuing their responsibility.

This theme was supported by Manrique's (2020) study, which states that social interactions and the shared experience of violence created moral bonds that implied obligations to defend each other's lives within a violent context where participation in violence was one of the few employment opportunities for men. Defending a fellow member's life and his patriarchal, economic responsibilities toward his family were considered a moral imperative in this context.

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Nussio (2020) shows how Maoists in Nepal use practices to acknowledge the risk of death by glorifying both the courage of the recruit and the sacrifice of the family.
In another study in the Philippine setting, Zech & Eastin (2023) state that CAA see themselves as soldiers on the front line in the defense of the nation. The study describes CAA's who serve in the community and nation, and even suggests life sacrifices and explains that half of their body is already dead.

Addressing the Problems Encountered by the Informants in the Fight Against Insurgency

Holistic Approach in the Performance of Duty

This theme describes the solutions and actions of the CAA during the fight against insurgency. This theme emerged from the responses of the informants in the data gathered. They performed their job in a proactive manner.

This theme was supported by Deviant Place Theory by Siegel (2001), in which the implication of this theory is to improve the physical and social conditions of the said deviant places. By educating the community on the preventive measures that could be taken in order to avoid the victimization of individuals. Preventive methods that could be taken, especially by the victims themselves, so as to ensure that they do not become gullible victims (Hussin & Zawawi, 2012).

This theme was also supported by the study of Aliyev (2016). The emergence of paramilitary organizations capable of fighting these rebel armies on behalf of the state, but existing parallel to governments and remaining beyond their control, emphasizes the growing importance of state-parallel militias.

Another study that supports this theme was the study of Espino (2004), in which the mobile forces, which are the maneuver battalions, are responsible for the conduct of internal security operations, while the territorial forces consisting of the government paramilitaries and the local police are responsible for village defense.

CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) is the front liner in the campaign strategy in the fight against insurgency and winning the support of the villagers, including the barangay officials. Physical security and protection of the community and properties against any insurgent attacks.

Spiritual Resiliency

This emergent theme describes the personal belief system of the informant in the fight against insurgency. The theme expresses how the informants cope with challenges in life through their faith.

This was supported by the study of Farley (2007). Her study states that spirituality influences resilience through perceiving, interpreting, and relating to the world. It shapes how individuals view their experiences, forms their beliefs and values, and provides emotional and moral support that helps them cope with challenges. Altogether, these functions strengthen a person's ability to adapt and remain strong in the face of adversity. Some individuals naturally possess resilient traits that help them thrive, and these traits can be further strengthened through spirituality.

Spirituality is viewed as a dynamic and fundamental aspect of human existence, inseparable from the essence of being human. It is widely recognized as an important part of life and has been consistently linked to enhanced mental and physical well-being, along with a longer lifespan. A physical journey is dynamic, unfolding across space and time, similar to how a spiritual journey evolves throughout a person's life, accompanying every stage of physical and emotional growth. It may encompass multiple and changing dimensions of spiritual experience, beginning with the recognition of the divine or transcendent and deepening into a personal connection with God, characterized by a profound sense of awe and reverence for the divine presence (Foy et al., 2011).

Professionalism and Teamwork

This theme evolved from the different responses of the informants, who express the nature of jobs that need collaboration and teamwork with their colleagues. Working in the military organization is not a one-man mission; it requires support from every member. It also requires professionalism in doing such operations.

This theme was supported by the study of Musa & Heinecken (2022), which found that the enforcement of loyalty, duty, obedience, and discipline of every military member is badly needed. The stability and vibrancy of a society depend on the military conducting themselves in a disciplined and honorable manner. Another study that supports on this was the study of Duel (2010) says that teamwork in the military is very important, each member should automatically into different situation knowing exactly on what to do and what to expect on other team members. He added that every soldier must always prepare for their tasks. Training and discipline in the field of their work are very important.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines lack nothing in doing such Basic Training and discipline to have well-versed military members, including all the CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA). The CAA is manned by well-

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experienced officials in the military to maintain professionalism in the said organizations. Mostly, the detachment commanders of the of every platoon are composed of scout ranger coming who experience rigid training in the field of military.

Aspirations of the Informants to Improve their Capabilities in the Fight Against Insurgency

Financial Security

The last part of the analysis of sub-problem the researches come up also one (1) emergent theme, the theme provides answers on the aspirations of the informants.

In this emergent theme, the informants disclose different feelings and emotions regarding the issue of benefits and allowances. Many of the members of the CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) aspire for the increase and adjustments of their benefits.

According to the study of Zech & Eastin (2021) that support on this theme that the economic insecurities prevalent among potential CAA recruits provide a backdrop to their decisions to enlist. When asked to describe their financial situation in the year before joining the group, 75 per cent of survey respondents selected either bad or very bad. As a result, the respondents confirmed that they need additional income. In this study, it implies that in order to improve the life of CAA, there must be a consistent source of income, especially for those who are in the rural areas.

The researcher's view is also similar to that of different studies, though there are CAA battalions that are funded by the local government with such benefits; however, in the case of this study, the researcher found out that the informants were begging for some adjustment to their salary and allowances and also the inclusion of other benefits. Most of them are relying on the small salary/honorarium and allowances coming from the government; they need to have other sources of income to make a living.

Ethical Consideration

The fundamental principles of ethics are applied in this study: beneficence, nonmaleficence, autonomy, and justice, in order to help and cause no harm by giving importance to keeping the best interests of the informants. During the conduct of the interview, the researcher must always consider the protection of morals and the rights of the informants to prevent harm or danger. The informant will be informed that his identity shall be kept confidential through the use of codes or a codename, and the privacy of the disclosed information will be treated with full confidentiality. The researcher is required to be careful in the conversation with the informants, avoiding offensive talk or offensive questions in interviewing that would bother the attention of the informants. The informants have the right to stop the conversation or interview when there are calls of nature and personal necessities, and not to deprive the informants of their good life. The informants will be treated fairly whatever the status of living, they may have different in social and economic status the researcher shall approach them in a nice way and courteous manner. The researcher shall develop and build relationship to the informant, informing the purpose and the importance of the research study. In this manner, the informants will also cooperate voluntarily in disclosing truthful information, support informed consent, and believe in the confidentiality of the data gathered. The researcher sets aside his assumptions and listens openly to participants' accounts. The findings may reveal that they continue serving because of financial needs, family responsibilities, a sense of duty, community protection, or a combination of factors.

Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the work world of the CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) in the fight against insurgency in Guihulngan City, Negros Oriental. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions: What are the experiences of the informants in the fight against insurgency? How do the informants address the problems encountered in the fight against insurgency? What are the aspirations of the informants to improve their capabilities in the fight against insurgency? This study employed the qualitative research method using the transcendental phenomenological approach. The experiences of CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) are transcribed from the recorded interviews of the informants and the researcher. The two sets of interviews, which are the in-depth interview and focus group discussion, were conducted in the three (3) detachments of Guihulngan City. These detachments are as follows: Hinakpan Patrol Base at Barangay Hinakpan, Balogo Patrol Base at Barangay Balogo and the other one is Garces Patrol Base at Barangay Villegas; two (2) of Hinakpan Patrol Base interviewed at his own house. The study has ten (10) informants who were active members of CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA). And most of them experience life threatening event like harassment and encounter with the terrorist (NPA) in their area of responsibility. The data gathered were comprehensively transcribed and analyzed by the researcher. The significant statements were coded, and meanings were formulated and categorized to develop cluster themes and emergent themes. As a result of the

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study, the researcher came up with eight (8) emergent themes from the different responses of the informants. These themes are divided accordingly to answer the sub-problems of the study. After the formulation by the researcher, there are four (4) themes developed to support part one of the interviews for the experiences of the informants in the fight against insurgency, namely: There are two themes that describe the positive experiences of the informants: *Work Fulfillment and Commitment to Community Safety*. The other two themes that describe the negative experiences of the informants are: *Duty in the Face of Danger and Perseverance Despite Difficulties*. There are also three (3) themes developed to support part two of the interview for the problems encountered by the informants in the fight against insurgency, namely: *Holistic Approach in the Performance of Duty, Spiritual Resiliency, and Professionalism and Teamwork*. Only one theme developed to support part three of the interview for the aspirations of the informants to improve their capabilities in the fight against insurgency; this theme was *Financial Security*.

Recommendations

Primarily, the research environment states that there are only a few members of CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) in every detachment. The researcher may suggest that the national government, through the Department of National Defense may continue their recruitment and training program for additional members of CAA to provide the required number of personnel in every detachment. The greater number of personnel may give impact to the sense of security of the villagers and in the maintenance of peace and order. The department may also prioritize the benefits and compensation of each member of the unit, through these it can make them feel more important in nation-building as a force multiplier of the government armed forces. All the active CAA members may continually engage with the villagers so that they build a mutual relationship with them not only in their barangay where they are situated but also in those barangays which are under their area of responsibility. Not all barangays have this so-called CAA detachment; that is why they need to collaborate with all barangays in their area of responsibility so that other villagers may know them well, especially the members of the barangay council. All they need to do is to established strong communication network to every barangay chairman and to each member of the council who is assigned specifically on the peace and order committee, so that whatever emergency happened they can communicate to each other. Because these committees are the first in hand who know well if there are problems in the peace and order in their barangay. In that manner, they can acquire information and reports that might require their actions and solutions. In short, there would always be villager and CAA proper coordination's. The Philippine Army may assign additional enlisted personnel to man the CAA members, especially in conducting foot patrol operations and engaging with the villagers in building mutual community relationships so that the give-and-take process would be strengthened. And the continuous campaign and symposium through the program of the government which is the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (*NTF-ELCAC*) a nationwide approach to attain inclusive and sustainable peace and in sustaining the fight against insurgency. The Philippine National Police may collaborate with the unit whenever a man-made disaster happens in their area of responsibility, especially if the location of the crisis is under the geographic area of the nearby CAA detachments, to lessen and prevent the possible opportunities of the enemy. The researcher may recommend to the Local Government Unit to allocate funding to counterpart for any adjustments of allowances and honoraria and other benefits like enrollment in the Social Security System and PhilHealth Insurance because one of the reasons for the shortage of personnel is the voluntary termination of service due to small compensation and lack of benefits. Finally, the community may always know that the Armed Forces of the Philippines is the protector of the people. To achieve that goal, there may be full support and cooperation of the civilians. The participation of the community in giving aid in intelligence report gathering also plays a vital role specially in the barangay level. The different researchers in the field of criminal justice may continually engage in research concerning national security that can aid in the formulation of policy for the improvement and advancement in terms of internal security of the national territory. The conduct of research extension projects by different detachments to enhance the productivity of the CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA). Additionally, there must be a thorough study on the level of awareness of the community on the duties and responsibilities of the CAA personnel. To determine if there are problems between the community and the unit itself. And the implementation of different livelihood programs among members of the CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) in relation to their effectiveness as a Philippine Army Force Multiplier.

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