

Readiness of Barangay Tanods for Crime Response as a Basis for a Proposed Extension Program

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Abstract. Barangay Tanods provide routine peacekeeping and initial assistance, but accounts of these duties do not establish competence in high-risk crime response. This study explored readiness and response challenges in Barangay Guinobatan, Trinidad, Bohol, to inform a locally relevant extension program. A qualitative descriptive design involved 10 purposively selected Tanods. A semi-structured interview guide addressed knowledge, resources, applied skills, and challenges. Interview notes were organized, reviewed, and summarized into descriptive categories aligned with the research questions; detailed coding and eligibility records remain to be verified. Participants described experience-based knowledge of patrol and reporting, teamwork, and communication with barangay officials and the police. They also reported gaps in procedural knowledge, dependable equipment, standardized referral, and confidence during dangerous encounters. Personal risk, limited transport, uncertainty about honoraria, and continuing emergency duties complicated their work. Readiness was experience-based and uneven across the examined dimensions. Reported apprehension, disarming, or self-defense practices were not independently assessed for competence or legality. A proposed extension program prioritizes safe initial response, legal and procedural literacy, communication, resource support, and volunteer welfare. The program has not been implemented or evaluated; its effectiveness remains to be established.

Keywords: Barangay Tanods; Community Peacekeeping; Crime Response; Extension Program; Readiness

Introduction

Barangay Tanods provide an immediate community presence during disturbances, calls for assistance, and other incidents affecting local peace and order. Participants in this study described patrolling, reporting concerns, and coordinating with barangay leaders and the Philippine National Police (PNP). Understanding how they carry out these tasks can inform practical support. However, familiarity with routine peacekeeping should be distinguished from independently demonstrated competence in dangerous or escalating incidents.

Readiness in this qualitative study refers to participants' accounts of knowledge, accessible resources, and skills used in crime-related situations. It is not a numerical rating or certification of operational ability. Willingness to serve and length of service may coexist with uncertainty about documentation, referral, and intervention boundaries. Equipment must also be functioning and accessible when needed; its reported presence alone does not establish response capacity.

Recent Philippine studies identify specific concerns that justify a locally grounded inquiry. Alamban et al. (2024) reported generally high knowledge among 140 Tanods but identified gaps in advanced emergency response and proactive patrolling. Lacanilao and Carpio (2025) likewise identified equipment and legal-knowledge constraints in Cabanatuan City. These studies establish the relevance of targeted development, but their survey findings do not explain how Tanods in Guinobatan describe decisions, risks, and support needs in their own setting.

The specific gap is the lack of context-rich evidence within the reviewed literature on how Barangay Guinobatan's Tanods experience the interaction of procedural knowledge, equipment access, coordination, and personal safety during crime response. The present study addresses that gap through qualitative accounts from 10 Tanods. It seeks to distinguish routine practices from reported difficulties during high-risk encounters and to translate those needs into a proposed extension program. It does not establish crime reduction or evaluate an implemented intervention.

Research Questions

The study explored Barangay Tanods' reported readiness and challenges in responding to crime incidents in Barangay Guinobatan, Trinidad, Bohol, during the study period identified as academic year 2024–2025. It addressed the following questions:

1. What are the participants' demographic characteristics in terms of age, sex, highest educational attainment, and length of service?
2. How do participants describe their readiness for crime response in terms of knowledge, available resources, and applied skills?
3. What challenges do participants report in responding to crime incidents in the barangay?
4. What extension program can be proposed from the findings to address the identified crime-response needs?

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The study involved 10 purposively selected Barangay Tanods from Barangay Guinobatan, Trinidad, Bohol. All references to the locale are confined to this barangay; the study did not sample several barangays. The inquiry covered participants' accounts of knowledge, equipment and support, applied skills, and response challenges as a basis for a proposed extension program. The findings describe the participating Tanods' experiences and are not statistically representative of all Tanods in Guinobatan or other communities. No numerical readiness scale, independent equipment audit, direct competency assessment, police response-time analysis, or crime-outcome evaluation was reported. Exact collection dates and the service histories of participants described as recently appointed require verification from the research records.

Literature Review

Community Peacekeeping and Local Response Capacity

Alamban et al. (2024) used a descriptive quantitative design to map the knowledge of 140 Tanods in Davao del Norte. Overall knowledge was reported as high, while advanced emergency-response and patrolling needs remained. Their findings show why a broad favorable assessment should not obscure task-specific gaps. The present qualitative inquiry examines how readiness is described in practice rather than transferring the study's numerical categories to Guinobatan.

Lacanilao and Carpio (2025) examined Tanods' first-response roles in selected Cabanatuan barangays. Their survey identified inadequate equipment and limited legal knowledge as prominent constraints. As perception-based findings, they do not independently establish lawful or competent intervention. They support examining procedural understanding and resource access together, while the present study adds accounts from a different local setting.

Buting et al. (2025) surveyed 403 barangay police personnel across 38 barangays and identified training needs involving public safety, operational procedures, judicial processes, and emergency response. Their extension-oriented approach supports selecting program content from an assessment of local needs. However, survey rankings cannot replace an examination of the circumstances in which particular volunteers experience uncertainty or risk. Qualitative accounts can help explain why a training topic matters locally.

Community Policing and the Limits of Generalized Claims

Haim et al. (2025) experimentally examined a seven-month community-policing intervention in the Philippines. Officers gained a better understanding of citizens' concerns, but the intervention did not generally increase empathy, trust, or accountability. The study concerned professional police officers rather than Tanods. Its relevance lies in showing that community engagement does not uniformly improve every outcome: training, contact, and confidence require separate evaluation rather than being treated as proof of competence or public trust.

Criminological and Program Development Perspectives

Routine Activity Theory identifies the convergence of likely offenders, suitable targets, and absent capable guardianship as relevant to predatory crime opportunities (Cohen & Felson, 1979). For this study, the concept of guardianship directs attention to observation, communication, and access to assistance. It does not imply that every Tanod is equipped to intervene safely in every incident or that Tanod presence alone has reduced local crime.

Weiner (2009) distinguishes commitment to organizational change from shared confidence in the ability to implement it. Resource availability and task demands influence those judgments. This framework helps interpret the feasibility of a future extension program, especially where willingness to serve coexists with

material constraints. It is not used as a validated measure of crime-response readiness or as evidence of collective efficacy in this sample.

Goldstein's (1979) problem-oriented approach calls for attention to substantive public-safety problems rather than organizational activity alone. Applied here, it supports matching extension activities to specific concerns such as inconsistent referral, documentation gaps, and unsafe encounters. Program attendance is therefore an implementation output, while safe scenario performance and reliable reporting arrangements would require separate assessment.

The reviewed studies address knowledge, training needs, resources, or community-policing outcomes using different populations and methods. Together, they support examining readiness as task-specific and dependent on organizational conditions. They do not provide an account of how Guinobatan's Tanods experience these dimensions together. This study contributes that local description and a proposed response, while leaving legal compliance, demonstrated competence, and intervention effectiveness to appropriate independent assessment.

Methodology

Research Design

A qualitative descriptive design was used to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and reported practices. Qualitative description seeks an accessible account close to participants' everyday language (Sandelowski, 2000). The design was appropriate for identifying practical needs for an extension program. It did not aim to calculate a readiness level, test statistical hypotheses, or establish causal effects.

Research Locale

The research was conducted in Barangay Guinobatan, Trinidad, Bohol, identified as an adopted barangay in the study.

Research Participants

Ten Tanods participated: nine males and one female, aged 28–72 years. Their reported service histories extended from recently appointed membership to 30 years. Exact appointment dates were not supplied for individual participants. Purposive sampling sought Tanods with relevant peacekeeping or crime-response experience. The reported criteria were official designation, active service, at least six months of service, and participation in peace-and-order activities or crime response. The description "recently appointed" does not itself show whether a participant met or failed the six-month requirement. Eligibility must be reconciled against appointment dates and the interview date; the threshold has not been changed during revision. The final sample contained 10 participants. The original account states that recruitment ended when no new significant information emerged, but it supplies no dated saturation log or participant-by-participant analysis record. Accordingly, saturation is not treated as independently demonstrated here. The authors should document the actual recruitment sequence, eligibility decisions, and basis for stopping before final submission. The study period is identified as academic year 2024–2025; exact data-collection dates remain unreported.

Research Instrument

A researcher-developed semi-structured guide addressed knowledge, available resources, applied skills, response challenges, and suggested development activities. Open-ended questions allowed participants to describe their experiences. The Research Director reviewed the guide for clarity, appropriateness, and alignment with the objectives, and the source reports pilot testing outside the actual sample. Details of pilot participants and resulting changes should be retained in the study documentation. No numerical reliability coefficient is claimed for the interview guide.

Data Gathering Procedure

Academic approval and permission from barangay officials preceded recruitment. Participants received an explanation of the study and provided written informed consent. Individual interviews were arranged at convenient times and locations. The discussions were documented through detailed notes and contextual observations. The records were organized and reviewed for accuracy and completeness before analysis. No verbatim recordings, interview durations, interview language, or translation procedures were provided in the manuscript; these should be specified only from existing records.

Results and Discussions

Research Question 1: What are the participants' demographic characteristics in terms of age, sex, highest educational attainment, and length of service?

Table 1. Summary of Participant Characteristics

Characteristic	Reported profile
1. Number of participants	10
2. Age	28 to 72 years; most described as in their 40s and 50s
3. Sex	9 male; 1 female
4. Educational attainment	1 college graduate; 1 vocational course completer; 8 with varying basic education levels
5. Length of service	Recently appointed to 30 years; exact individual durations not supplied

Participants varied in age, education, and experience. Nine were male and one female. Most had varying levels of basic education, while one had completed a vocational course and one was a college graduate. These characteristics support considering accessible language and demonstrations in program design, without equating educational attainment, age, or tenure with competence. The phrase “recently appointed” remains descriptive pending verification of the six-month criterion.

Research Question 2: How do participants describe their readiness for crime response in terms of knowledge, available resources, and applied skills?

Table 2. Descriptive Summary of Reported Readiness

Dimension	Reported strengths	Reported gaps
1. Knowledge	Routine patrol, reporting, referral, and familiarity with some local procedures	Limited formal instruction, legal literacy, documentation, and standardized procedures
2. Resources	Basic radios, batons, flashlights, whistles, arnis sticks, and handcuffs; occasional transport	Uneven availability and condition; requests for individual radios, dependable lighting, protection, and transport
3. Skills	Communication, coordination, composure, mediation, de-escalation, and self-defense	Uneven training and confidence; need for supervised practice and clear response protocols

Table 2 presents qualitative categories, not measured levels. Each dimension contains both reported strengths and needs. The findings describe experience-based and uneven readiness across knowledge, resources, and applied skills; they do not warrant a numerical or “moderate” classification.

Knowledge Developed Through Routine Duties

Participants described learning through patrol, monitoring disturbances, reporting incidents, and coordinating assistance. Several acknowledged limited knowledge for serious or escalating situations, including needs related to documentation and response procedures. Long service was therefore not treated as evidence that formal procedural knowledge was sufficient. Alamban et al. (2024) similarly identified task-specific development needs despite favorable overall knowledge ratings; the present accounts explain the local distinction between routine familiarity and difficult incidents.

Resources and Access during Duty

Participants identified radios as important for contacting fellow Tanods, barangay leaders, and the PNP. They also reported batons, flashlights, whistles, arnis sticks, handcuffs, and occasional transport, alongside uneven access and equipment condition. Their requests concerned dependable communication, lighting, protective materials, and transport. These were reported resources rather than independently inventoried assets. Resource constraints also appeared in the Cabanatuan study (Lacanilao & Carpio, 2025), supporting the relevance of checking both equipment availability and usability.

Applied Skills and the Boundaries of Intervention

Reported skills included communication, composure, mediation, coordination, self-defense, and de-escalation. Some accounts also referred to apprehension and disarming. These descriptions document what participants said they had done; they do not certify lawful authority, correct technique, or safe execution. No observation checklist, case-file review, or legal assessment was reported. Extension activities should consequently prioritize recognizing danger, maintaining safety, requesting qualified assistance, and understanding intervention boundaries rather than treating reported confrontations as evidence of proficiency.

This distinction is consistent with a careful use of capable guardianship: observing, reporting, and mobilizing assistance are relevant protective functions, but the theory does not validate particular intervention tactics (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Training needs identified elsewhere likewise require adaptation to specific duties and participant capacities rather than direct transfer of survey-based competence labels (Buting et al., 2025).

Coordination Confidence and Community Relationships

Participants described contacting the Barangay Captain or Kagawad and seeking PNP assistance, with variation in the sequence and timing of these actions. Informal familiarity may facilitate contact while leaving reporting expectations unclear. The practical priority is a jointly agreed communication and referral arrangement that participants can rehearse and use during duty.

Confidence varied with incident seriousness, experience, and training exposure. Fear coexisted with commitment to service. Haim et al. (2025) show that community contact and favorable attitudes do not improve uniformly across all outcomes. By analogy, the present accounts should not equate willingness, local familiarity, or confidence with demonstrated operational capability. This interpretation supports separate evaluation of communication, procedural understanding, and safe decisions.

Research Question 3: What challenges do participants report in responding to crime incidents in the barangay?

Table 3. Summary of Reported Response Challenges

Challenge area	Reported experiences
1. Personal safety	Armed individuals, violent confrontations, aggressive behavior, and fleeing suspects
2. Coordination	Delayed police assistance and reliance on informal reporting arrangements
3. Resources	Insufficient equipment, limited transport, and inconsistent access to communication tools
4. Institutional support	Uncertainty over honoraria and limited continuing training and recognition
5. Confidence and community relations	Fear, psychological pressure, non-cooperation, and reduced community respect
6. Additional emergency duties	Typhoons, flooding, rescue, and evacuation responsibilities

Personal safety and delayed access to assistance are immediate program priorities because participants described armed or aggressive persons, violent encounters, and pressure while waiting for police support. These experiences are not presented as verified incident counts or measured response delays. Together with equipment constraints, they indicate a need to address the conditions of response rather than attribute every difficulty to individual skill.

Participants also reported uncertainty over honoraria, limited continuing support, psychological pressure, and difficulties involving community cooperation or respect. Commitment and teamwork remained coping resources. Weiner's (2009) framework helps distinguish commitment from the perceived feasibility of collective action: willingness to serve may persist even when resources and support are insufficient. Training alone would not resolve material or welfare concerns.

Disaster-related duties, including typhoon and flood response, rescue, and evacuation, also appeared in the accounts. These findings show overlapping responsibilities but do not constitute a separate disaster-readiness assessment. Emergency support may be included in the proposed program, with qualified instruction and clear referral arrangements. The reported need for emergency-response training also appears in Buting et al. (2025).

Research Question 4: What extension program can be proposed from the findings to address the identified crime-response needs?

A Barangay Tanod Crime Response Readiness Extension Program is proposed for Barangay Guinobatan. Its immediate priorities are safe initial response and police referral, followed by procedural literacy, communication and equipment support, and sustained welfare and learning. This order reflects the urgency of the reported risks rather than a numerical ranking of themes. The program has not been implemented or evaluated.

Table 4. Proposed Extension Program and Responsible Stakeholders

Priority	Proposed activity	Responsible stakeholders	Proposed evidence
1. Safety and referral	Recognize escalating risk; practice safe communication, de-escalation and prompt referral through supervised scenarios	PNP trainers and barangay leadership with institutional extension staff	Approved scenario checklist and tested escalation/contact pathway
2. Procedural literacy	Clarify roles, intervention boundaries, rights, reporting and incident documentation using accessible examples	PNP legal or qualified resource personnel and extension staff	Scenario explanations and completed sample incident reports
3. Communication and equipment	Update contact directory; rehearse radio use and joint reporting; inventory and check equipment condition	Barangay and municipal authorities, Tanod leadership and PNP focal persons	Documented contact tests and equipment functioning during duty
4. Emergency support	Provide qualified first-aid orientation and safe emergency referral linked to local response arrangements	Qualified emergency-service trainers and municipal response office	Trainer-assessed demonstrations and correct referral choices
5. Welfare and continuing learning	Review honoraria and support arrangements; provide refresher sessions, peer support and recognition	Barangay and municipal authorities with institutional partners	Documented support decisions, refresher completion and participant feedback
6. Evaluation	Establish baseline; repeat practical assessment after training; review implementation and selected field records	Extension coordinator, qualified assessors, barangay leadership and PNP	Observed skill changes and functioning reporting arrangements; adverse events reviewed

A needs-confirmation meeting should precede implementation. Partners should agree on content, schedule, costs, responsibilities, accessibility, and evaluation safeguards. Exercises should match participants' educational backgrounds and physical capacities and be supervised by qualified practitioners. Program development should address the identified problems, consistent with Goldstein's (1979) approach, rather than treat the number of sessions as the main indicator of success.

The proposed evaluation distinguishes delivery measures, such as participation and completed sessions, from demonstrated outcomes, such as correct referral decisions, sample documentation, and usable communication arrangements. A baseline and follow-up design could examine change after implementation, but causal attribution would require a stronger evaluation design. No completion figures, assessment gains, crime reductions, or projected benefits are represented as observed results.

Ethical Considerations

Barangay Guinobatan's participating Tanods described experience-based readiness for routine patrol, reporting, and initial coordination, alongside uneven procedural knowledge, equipment access, applied skills, and confidence during high-risk incidents. Their accounts indicate that commitment and service experience coexist with needs for structured instruction and institutional assistance. Readiness is therefore described as experience-based and uneven across the examined dimensions, without assigning a numerical level. The findings support a proposed extension program that first addresses safety and timely referral, then strengthens procedural literacy, dependable communication, equipment support, emergency assistance, and volunteer welfare. Reported apprehension or disarming does not establish competent or lawful execution. The program remains a proposal; implementation and evaluation are necessary before claiming improved operational competence or community safety.

Conclusion

The participating Barangay Tanods described practical readiness for routine peacekeeping and initial coordination, alongside gaps in formal training, procedural knowledge, equipment, and confidence during high-risk incidents. Their service experience supported everyday duties but did not remove the need for continuing instruction and institutional assistance. The findings support an extension program combining legal and procedural literacy, communication practice, safe initial response, emergency support, and resource monitoring. The source characterizes readiness as moderate, but its qualitative design and lack of a numerical rating scale do not establish a measured moderate level. The defensible conclusion is that readiness was experience-based and uneven across the dimensions examined. The proposed program requires implementation and evaluation before claims about improved competence or community safety can be made.

Recommendations

First, barangay leadership and the PNP should agree on and test clear contact, escalation, and referral arrangements for dangerous incidents. Qualified trainers should prioritize risk recognition, safe initial response, de-escalation, and the boundaries of intervention. The educational institution's extension team may coordinate accessible learning materials and supervised scenarios. Second, barangay and municipal authorities should verify equipment inventories and condition and prioritize dependable communications, lighting, protective materials, and transport arrangements appropriate to local needs. Maintenance and duty-time access should accompany procurement. Training should not be used as a substitute for essential operational support. Third, the PNP and institutional partners should provide procedural and documentation exercises, followed by refresher activities and structured incident review. Barangay and municipal leaders should review honoraria, recognition, and support needs through the appropriate administrative process. These are recommendations for responsible stakeholders, not guarantees of funding or program approval. Fourth, partners should implement the extension program only after agreeing on responsibilities, costs, schedule, and evaluation. Assessments should examine practical performance and functional referral arrangements as well as participant feedback. Future studies may include police, barangay officials, and community perspectives and combine interviews with ethically obtained observation or administrative records. The eligibility, coding, date, and ethics documentation identified in Appendix A should be resolved before publication.

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