

Self – Protection Readiness of Barangay Tanod in The Municipality of Indang, Cavite

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Abstract

This study assessed the self-protection readiness of barangay tanod in the Municipality of Indang, Cavite, focusing on their demographic profile, training exposure, preferred training formats, self-defense skill interests, and confidence in responding to threatening situations. A descriptive research design was employed, involving 222 barangay tanod respondents, with data gathered through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using frequency and percentage distribution. Findings revealed that most barangay tanod are middle-aged to older adults with strong community commitment and varied lengths of service. Slightly more than half of the respondents had attended a formal self-defense course; however, training participation was limited by time constraints, financial concerns, and work-related responsibilities. Respondents showed a strong preference for practical, in-person training formats and expressed high interest in duty-related self-defense skills such as general self-defense, Arnis, baton use, and arresting and controlling techniques. Despite this interest, the majority of barangay tanod reported only a moderate level of confidence in their ability to defend themselves in threatening situations, indicating that existing training and experience may not be sufficient to ensure optimal preparedness. The study concludes that while self-protection readiness among barangay tanod in Indang, Cavite, is evident, it remains moderate and needs enhancement through structured, accessible, and context-specific self-defense training programs. The findings provide a basis for the development of improved training interventions aimed at strengthening the personal safety and operational effectiveness of barangay tanod. This study is related to United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 11 and 16, which aim to make communities safe through responsible community members.

Keywords: Barangay Tanod; Community Police Aide; Arnis, Community Law Enforcement; Peace and Order; Self-Protection

1. Introduction

Barangay Tanods play a crucial role in maintaining peace and order at the grassroots level in Philippine communities. As community police aides, they serve as first responders to public disturbances, crimes, emergencies, and disasters. Under the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Memorandum Circular No. 2003-42, Barangay Tanods function as the lowest level of law enforcement, providing vital support to local government units and the Philippine National Police.

Previous studies have established the effectiveness of Barangay Tanods in peacekeeping, disaster response, and community safety awareness (Saligan et al., 2018; De Asis et al., 2020; Empinado et al., 2024). During the COVID-19 pandemic, Tanods played a critical role in enforcing health protocols and maintaining order (Bente et al., 2022). Despite their importance, Barangay Tanods often face direct exposure to threats and violence, making self-protection readiness essential. Self-defense training for Barangay Tanods typically involves Arnis or baton use, reflecting the Philippines' national martial art and the Tanod's standard defensive equipment. However, there is limited empirical research assessing whether such training sufficiently prepares Tanods for real-life threatening situations. Existing literature highlights the need for continuous training, yet few studies specifically evaluate self-defense readiness, confidence levels, and training preferences of Barangay Tanods.

Given these gaps, this study aimed to assess the self-protection readiness of Barangay Tanods in the Municipality of Indang, Cavite. Specifically, it examined their demographic profile, motivations for service, training exposure, self-defense confidence, training preferences, and perceived barriers to participation. The findings are intended to serve as a basis for developing structured and context-specific self-defense training programs, particularly as part of community extension initiatives of Cavite State University.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Research Design

This study employed a descriptive quantitative research design to assess the level of self-protection readiness among Barangay Tanods in Indang, Cavite.

2.2. Research Settings

This study was conducted in the Municipality of Indang, Province of Cavite, Philippines. It is one of the densely populated provinces near the National Capital Region. The study was conducted in the last quarter of 2025.

2.3. Respondents

The participants in this study were 222 active Barangay Tanod from the 36 barangays of the Municipality of Indang. A single-stage cluster sampling was used to select the sample to obtain data from selected participants in each barangay. The barangays are clusters, and in each cluster, a sample of five to seven samples was selected, and it is ensured that a female is selected to obtain more data, with fair consideration for gender inclusiveness

2.4. Research Instruments

Data were collected using a researcher-constructed questionnaire comprising 14 items covering demographic characteristics, reasons for becoming a Tanod, training exposure, self-defense skills, confidence levels, training preferences, and barriers to training participation. The instrument underwent expert validation and reliability testing prior to data collection.

2.5. Data Collection

After validation of the research instrument, approval was sought from the Barangay Captains (Community Leaders) through a formal letter of approval. The research instrument was administered face-to-face. Based on the interpreted data, a summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations was formulated.

2.6. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using frequency and percentage distribution. Cluster sampling considerations were applied during aggregation and interpretation to ensure an accurate representation of the population.

2.7. Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were strictly observed, including informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and data privacy. No identifying personal information was collected, and participation posed no physical or psychological risk to respondents.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Demographic Profile

Most respondents were male (87.4%), while females comprised 12.6%, indicating male dominance in Barangay Tanod service. Age distribution showed that the majority were middle-aged to older adults, particularly those aged 45–54 years (31.1%) and 55–64 years (25.7%). Younger adults aged 18–24 years (0.9%) and 25–34 years (12.6%) were underrepresented, suggesting limited youth participation. In terms of occupation, most Tanods were drivers (34.7%), followed by those serving exclusively as Tanods (23.4%), construction workers (10.4%), farmers (8.1%), and housewives (6.3%). These findings indicate that Barangay Tanods largely come from working-class backgrounds and balance security duties with livelihood responsibilities. Regarding years of service, 37.8% had served for 1–3 years, 17.6% were newly appointed, and 29.3% had served for five years or more, reflecting a mix of new and experienced members.

3.2. Motivation for Service

The primary motivation for becoming a Barangay Tanod was community need (52.3%), followed by encouragement from others (38.8%). Barangay personnel were the main influencers in recruitment (58.6%), while 26.6% joined through self-initiative.

3.3. Training Exposure and Confidence

Slightly more than half of the respondents (52.3%) had attended a formal self-defense course, while 47.7% had no training. Among those trained, Arnis/Baton training was the most common (77%), followed by Karate (20.7%). Exposure to other

self-defense disciplines was minimal. In terms of confidence, most respondents rated themselves as moderately confident (68.6%) in their ability to defend themselves. Only 18% reported high to very high confidence, while 13.4% expressed low or no confidence, indicating gaps in perceived preparedness.

3.4. Training Preferences and Barriers

Respondents strongly preferred seminar-based, in-person training (59.9%), followed by one-on-one and in-person instruction. Online courses (3.6%) were the least preferred. Preferred skills included general self-defense, Arnis/baton use, and arresting and controlling techniques, reflecting the practical demands of barangay policing. The most significant barriers to training participation were time constraints (64.9%), financial limitations (18.9%), and health or physical fitness concerns (11.3%).

3.5. Summary of Findings

The findings show that Barangay Tanods in Indang, Cavite, are predominantly middle-aged to older individuals with strong community commitment. While experience and maturity contribute to stability, the low participation of younger adults raises concerns regarding long-term sustainability. Although more than half of the respondents had received self-defense training, exposure was largely limited to Arnis or baton use, and confidence levels remained mostly moderate. This suggests that current training initiatives may be insufficient in scope, frequency, or depth to fully prepare Tanods for real-world threats. The strong preference for practical, face-to-face training and duty-related skills highlights the need for contextualized and accessible programs. Time and financial constraints further emphasize the importance of barangay-based, subsidized training interventions. Overall, the results indicate that self-protection readiness among Barangay Tanods exists but remains moderate, requiring systematic enhancement.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concludes that while members of Barangay Tanod demonstrate strong community commitment and willingness to serve, there are clear gaps in training access, skill diversity, and self-defense confidence. Although many have some exposure to self-defense training, this exposure is often limited and insufficient to build high confidence levels. The preference for practical, duty-relevant skills such as Arnis and arresting techniques highlights the need for contextualized training programs tailored to real-life barangay policing scenarios. Addressing time, financial, and accessibility barriers is essential to improving participation and effectiveness.

It is concluded that the barangay Tanod demonstrates a moderate level of self-protection readiness. This readiness is influenced by their demographic characteristics, training exposure, and perceived confidence in handling threatening situations. The study establishes that the self-protection readiness of barangay Tanod in Indang, Cavite is present but not optimal, underscoring the need for structured, accessible, and context-specific self-defense training programs to enhance their preparedness, confidence, and effectiveness in ensuring personal and community safety.

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, several recommendations are proposed. First, a standardized self-defense training program should be developed for Barangay Tanod, emphasizing practical skills such as Arnis, baton use, arresting and controlling techniques, and situational defense. To address common challenges related to time and transportation, regular barangay-based seminars and training sessions should also be conducted. In addition, subsidized or free training programs may be provided through partnerships with Local Government Units (LGUs), the Philippine National Police (PNP), the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and sports or martial arts institutions. To ensure the long-term sustainability of Barangay Tanod programs, youth participation should be encouraged through targeted recruitment and orientation activities. Refresher courses and continuous training should likewise be implemented, particularly for newly appointed Tanod and those who exhibit low confidence levels. Furthermore, the documentation and classification of training courses should be improved to allow clearer assessment of training effectiveness in future studies. Finally, future researchers may examine the relationship between self-defense training and actual performance or incident response effectiveness by using experimental or mixed-method approaches.

Compliance with ethical standards

The authors declare no conflict of interest. This study is self-funded and received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or non-profit sectors.

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