

Community Based Crime Prevention Program: a Partnership Approach at the Local Level

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ABSTRACT

Crime prevention remains as a top priority to ensure public security and safety among its residence. This research study is about the “Community Based Crime Prevention Program: A Partnership Approach at the local level”. It uses qualitative - Phenomenological design with the used of thematic analysis to explore the participants experience and observation on the implementation of crime prevention. It employed Convenient sampling technique with the used of the interview guide in a semi-structured to extract the necessary data among the participants. There were five(5) generated codes based on the data collected and analyze; Active reporting of traffic incidents, Delayed reporting of violent crimes, Fear of involvement, Witness trauma/shock, PNP delayed response due to late reporting. With these, three (3) central theme was identified based on the generated code; Community’s Active Involvement in some Incidents, Lack of parental control and the normalization of deviant behavior among youth, and Delayed Reporting and Selective Disclosure Undermine Crime Response. It is therefore concluded that while there is an essential for community participation in crime prevention—especially in monitoring drug-related activities and supporting barangay officials and tanods—this cooperation does not consistently extend to the effect of crime prevention for slow reporting of actual crimes, particularly violent offenses such as rape, robbery, and domestic abuse.

Keywords: barangay local government, barangay tanod, community based crime prevention

1. INTRODUCTION

Community crime prevention refers to actions intended to change the social conditions that are believed to sustain crime in residential communities. Different approaches have evolved, which can be understood as a progression of policy paradigms emerging as responses to changing the community conditions. Prevention in high-crime areas presents particular difficulties for community approaches. Community approaches have foundered mostly because of insufficient understanding of the nature of social relations within residential areas and of how community crime careers are shaped by the influence of progressive community. Thus, Crime Prevention is a global program that aim to mitigate crime problem and provide solution for it.

On the PNP General Safety and Crime Prevention Information states that The Philippine National Police is committed to ensuring public safety and reducing the fear and the incidence of crime in the community. But there are many things each and every community member can do to reduce his or her chances of becoming a victim or prevent the incidence of crime from happening (PNP, 2016) [1]. Addressing the UN Security Council [2], The United Nations Secretary-General observed that in matters of justice, prevention is worth better than a cure. Prevention is the first imperative of justice, the prevention of crime is the keystone requirement for the establishment of a safe and secure society, the achievement of which is a prerequisite for healthy economic growth through continuing business investment as well as community wellbeing cohesion (Homel, 2015) [3].

Offenders choose to take advantage of limited crime opportunities where crime is low risk, easy, rewarding, socially encourage or provoke. Macapagal, 2018 [4] on her ABS CBN reported article the nationwide crime rate from July 2016 to June 2018 dropped by 21.48 % compared to same period from 2014 to 2016 but crime of murder saw an increase of 1.50% or 19,210.

According to Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), 2020 [5], Crime and safety Report, Crime continues to remain a significant concern in urban areas of the Philippines. Among index crimes, theft reported the highest crime volume, followed by robbery and physical injury. Meanwhile, the volume of non-index crime was higher than those in violation of special laws (Alvarez et al., 2021) [6]. Other common crimes included pickpocketing, confidence schemes, and credit card fraud. Carjacking, robberies, and violent assaults also occurred throughout the country.

PNP reported that crime decreased from 2018 to 2019 according to statistics of index and non-index crimes (DILG, 2019) [7]. This includes crimes against person, such as physical injuries and sexual assault. Victims have reported robberies committed by taxi drivers and/or individuals using stolen taxicabs. Reports of crime associated with other ride-sharing services are relatively uncommon.

The City of Cauayan is considered as a peaceful city of the north with a low crime rate, but in some instances petty crimes were committed mostly in the three barangay the District I, II & III. A recent report from the Bombo radio that the PNP was alarmed by increasing incident of rape and usually victims were minor and a family member (Bombo Radyo Cauayan, 2025) [8]. This research will strengthen the community based crime prevention program, a partnership approach at the local level which significantly include the barangay officials, barangay tanod, and the PNP officials involved in prevention of crimes.

Thus, this study aim to explore the Community Based Crime Prevention, A Partnership Approach at the Local Level and specifically seek to answer the following questions;

Statement of the Problem;

This research study is intended to explore the Community Based Crime Prevention Program, A Partnership Approach at the local level and specifically seek to answer the following questions;

What are the experiences of the participants on the implementation of Community based Crime prevention?
How does the peace officer response in terms of preventing the crime?

METHODOLOGY

This presents the methods and procedures by the researchers in gathering the necessary data needed in exploring of the study. This discussion is focused on the following: research design, locale of the study, population and sampling, research instrument, data gathering procedure and the statistical treatment of data.

Research design

This study used the Qualitative - Phenomenological design with the used of thematic analysis. This was use to understand a phenomenon's universal nature by exploring the views of those who have experienced it(H, L. 2023) [9]. In other words, phenomenological research studies lived experiences to gain deeper insights into how people understand those experiences. The qualitative method of phenomenology provides a theoretical tool for educational research as it allows researchers to engage in flexible activities that can describe and help to understand complex phenomena, such as various aspects of human social experience(Alhazmi, A. A., & Kaufmann, A. 2022) [10].

Locale and Participants of the Study

This study was conducted in the three(3) Barangay of Cauayan City Isabela, particularly on the three(3) major Barangay of the City; the District I, II and III to include the PNP personnel employing Convenient sampling Qualitative technique, and the participants of the study were the 3 chief tanods, 3 Barangay officials and 3 PNP personnel of the City Police Station.

Research Instrument

The instrument used in this study was semi-structured questionnaire as a guide during the actual interview. Semi-structured interviews are excellent for [experiences on the target results](#) how people really experience. Open-ended questions allow the respondent to provide amount answers, with the potential for more valuable insights than other forms of data collection.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher first sought permission through a written letter from the office of the city Mayor and then furnished a copy to the identified participants particularly the head of each Barangay and the PNP station to allow the researcher to conduct interview. After the permission was granted, a permission was sought from the Barangay secretary and the Chief of Police to assist on the interview.

Treatment of Data

The research were treated with the used of Thematic analysis, this is a common to qualitative research method that involves identifying and analyzing patterns or themes. It's a way to organize large volumes of text-based information into a coding framework like groups or themes(Perenara-Wilkinson, J. 2025) [11]. In thematic analysis, a "theme" is a recurring pattern of meaning. Themes come from codes, which are labels assigned to segments of text representing important ideas. They go beyond simple keywords, capturing broader concepts that summarize what people are saying or experiencing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result of interview conducted among the nine(9) participants exposed their experience and participation on the community in crime prevention as a crucial step in maintaining order. These are the generated codes based

from the result of interview among participants; Active reporting of traffic incidents, Delayed reporting of violent crimes, Fear of involvement, Witness trauma/shock, PNP delayed response due to late reporting. Thus, The researcher has identified a three (3) central theme regarding the Community Based Crime Prevention, A Partnership Approach at the local level, to wit;

Community's Active Involvement in some Incidents

Community is the core arm to maintain peace in order in the community, the PNP and the Barangay most of the time relies on the reporting coming from the concern individual, however, participants emphasized a noticeable difference in the community's responsiveness when it comes to reporting incidents. This reporting incidents is vital among law enforcers to actively response on-time. Participants experience that in general, that the non-violent events, such as traffic accidents or minor disturbances, often demonstrating a proactive attitude in reporting the authorities. However, this active participation significantly declines in situations involving violence—such as incidents of shooting, robbery, or homicide.

It was articulated by Participant 1, who stated that:

“The problem when incidents of killing, robbery or shooting incidents [occur], the information is very late—maybe due to fear to themselves to be involved, or maybe the witnesses are still in shock or trauma.”

This statement point-out two significant fundamental factors. First is the fear of personal involvement or fear of retaliation, which prevent person from out rightly informing law enforcement. In high-risk incidents, the perceived danger associated with reporting can be substantial, especially in communities where trust in the criminal justice system may be weak or where there is fear of being identified by perpetrators. Second is the emotional and psychological impact on witnesses. Being a witness to violent events can result in shock or trauma, which may delay cognitive processing and the ability to act or communicate effectively. [Gorisi, P., \(2001\) \[12\]](#). Result of his research about crime prevention states that creating a safer community is merely reduced to controlling and disciplining the most vulnerable groups, their opportunities for participation and emancipation are blocked. It will be argued that a conflict model has to be preferred in order to develop a socially just crime prevention model. A pattern portrays a theme of a community engaging when they feel bound by conditions and revealing the conditional willingness to support authorities depending on the incident and the risk or impact it carries emotionally. It shows that fear and trauma act as obstacles to sharing information in a timely manner, which for the PNP (Philippine National Police), creates delays in their response time, precision, and efficiency. The delay in reporting incidents undermines the understanding of the current situation and diminishes chances for immediate resolutions leading to unimpeded capture or restraintment of criminals.

Hence, Centering Violence Against Women demonstrates a certain level of willingness to be cooperative under these conditions, but the response to violent crime is blocked by psychosocial variables along with safety. These obstacles can be removed through targeted approaches, creating trust in protective authority, community engagement sensitive to trauma, and the granting of confidentiality along with safety to those willing to speak out.

Lack of parental control and the normalization of deviant behavior among youth.

The first theme is about the Community's Active Involvement in some Incidents that hinder residents from promptly reporting violent crimes, most participants revealed added layer of social intricacy that impacts community and police cooperation—the **lack of parental control and the normalization of deviant behavior among youth**.

The Participants of this research 2, 4, and 5 positively noted the community's struggle to maintain order when it comes to the involvement of minor residents, who engaged in some petty crimes such as reckless driving, often with modified or prohibited mufflers. These behaviors, while seemingly minor, frequently lead to traffic accidents and serve as early indicators of **delinquent tendencies**. The lack of community cooperation is especially evident when residents choose not to report these acts or when they express indifference, even tolerance, toward such misconduct.

This dynamic was further emphasized by Participant 4's statement:

“Almost parents are tolerating the bad behavior of their son, that's the big problem. Parents don't know how to become a parent.”

This quote encapsulates a critical insight—the **erosion of parental authority and accountability**, which contributes not only to juvenile misbehavior but also to the broader issue of underreporting and non-cooperation. When parental figures are either unwilling or unable to discipline their children, a culture of impunity begins to form, where minor offenses like shoplifting, vandalism, or reckless driving are normalized. Over time, such normalization can escalate into more serious offenses, fostering a **cycle of minor deviance** that the community struggles to break.

Moreover, this tolerance for petty crimes reflects a broader **breakdown in informal social control mechanisms**. In many communities, parents, elders, and local leaders traditionally serve as the first line of behavioral regulation.

However, the data suggest that these roles are either weakened or no longer effectively performed, leaving a gap that formal policing alone cannot fill.

This condition complicates law enforcement efforts, as cooperation from the community—particularly from those closest to the offenders—is often critical in preventing, detecting, or responding to crime. Without strong family discipline and shared community responsibility, even well-intentioned police efforts are undermined by **a lack of grassroots support**. The researched conducted by [Kelly](#) et al., (2005) [13], they found out that the experiences of a community that has successfully sustained its crime prevention is through social development activities. It explores broad philosophical approach to sustainability applied to community-based initiatives such as crime prevention. In this regard, traditional situational crime prevention strategies are compared with crime prevention through social development. The evidence from the case study community illustrates the importance for sustainability of such factors as bottom-up decision-making, flexibility, inclusion and integration. The findings suggest that crime prevention through social development provides a framework for developing sustainable community-based crime prevention activities. The implications of these findings are considered with respect to the sustainability of other community-based initiatives.

Additionally, the reluctance of parents to acknowledge or intervene in their children's behavior may be rooted in a combination of fear (of damaging relationships, or confronting legal consequences), lack of awareness, or even resignation due to socioeconomic pressures. These factors all contribute to a **passive or permissive community culture**, one that inadvertently enables juvenile delinquency.

Delayed and Selective Reporting Weaken Crime Response

While the community appears to be involved in proactive crime prevention in some areas—such as reporting drug-related activity or supporting barangay tanod deployment—there is a marked inconsistency in how residents respond to actual crimes. Participants 7, 8, and 9 acknowledged that while people are participative in sharing intelligence (e.g., identities and whereabouts of drug users), **serious crimes such as rape, theft, and robbery are often underreported or reported too late**, limiting the effectiveness of police intervention. Shepherdson, et. Al., (2014) [14]. the concluded that in Community safety and crime prevention partnerships, community safety and crime prevention activity is supported by interagency committees.

This gap between **prevention-oriented engagement** and **response-oriented reporting** has critical implications. For example, Participant 9 mentioned:

“We only knew one victim of rape that she was abused by her stepfather two years ago.”

This delayed disclosure of a grave crime like **rape**, especially within a domestic context, reveals deeply rooted barriers—**shame, stigma, fear of retaliation, and distrust of authorities**—that prevent victims or their families from coming forward. The fact that the abuse remained hidden for years illustrates how **invisible crimes**, particularly those involving sexual violence or domestic abuse, can go unreported due to cultural taboos, power dynamics within families, or social pressure to maintain silence.

Similarly, Participant 7 noted:

“The victim of theft did not report due to small amount, but when his neighbor complained about his missing motor vehicle with the same perpetrator...”

This statement points to **perceived triviality** of certain crimes and the common practice of **underreporting based on economic value**. Crimes like petty theft may not be seen as “worth reporting” unless the stakes are high, such as in cases involving expensive property like vehicles. This mentality contributes to the **normalization of low-level criminality**, allowing repeat offenders to escalate their behavior without early intervention. Hawkins, et al., (2002) [15], Promoting science-based prevention in communities are effective means of prevention of crimes, they conclude that In the past decade, prevention science has emerged as a discipline but in the study conducted by [Homel](#), et al.,(2015) [16], states that developmental crime prevention is founded on the long-term outcomes and economic efficiency. Their paper describes one approach to building capacity for population-level community-based developmental prevention using the CREATE model. CREATE is an acronym: Collaborative; Relationships-driven; Early in the pathway; Accountable; Training-focused; Evidence-driven.

As a result of these patterns, **the PNP's capacity to respond is hampered**. Delayed or inconsistent reporting creates informational blind spots that prevent timely arrests or intervention, especially in fast-moving situations or when evidence may deteriorate quickly. Without accurate, real-time data from the community, enforcement efforts become **reactive rather than proactive**, weakening public safety outcomes.

CONCLUSION;

The conclusions of this qualitative research reveal a multifaceted patterns in community involvement with regards to community crime prevention, crime reporting, and the efficiency of law enforcement response to incidence. While there is an essential for community participation in crime prevention—especially in monitoring drug-related activities and supporting barangay officials and tanods—this cooperation does not consistently extend to the effect of crime prevention for slow reporting of actual crimes, particularly violent offenses such as rape,

robbery, and domestic abuse. Three themes were emerge in this study; Community's Active Involvement in some Incidents, Lack of parental control and the normalization of deviant behavior among youth, and Delayed and Selective Reporting Weaken Crime Response

The Philippine National Police personnel of the City collectively contribute to the delayed transmission of information from the community that has significantly effect on peace and order. As a result, public safety efforts were not enforce properly, and opportunities for early intervention are often missed.

RECOMMENDATIONS;

To address the result of this study about the crime prevention approach at the local level, it needs a multi-faceted approach, it cannot be pinpoint to a certain group within the community but it is a whole approach intervention; thus, the following recommendation is necessary to address such challenges;

The Philippine National Police (PNP) shall intensify the community engagement on crime prevention particularly to the barangay officials, and barangay tanod to foster common trust and must have an open communication to include a regular barangay dialogues, crime prevention seminars, and joint patrols with barangay tanods.

2. Conduct specific information campaigns that promote timely crime reporting of any or all occurrences of crime, regardless of perceived severity. Establish a community based mobile apps that allow victims and witnesses of crime to report their knowledge confidently and safely.

3. Encourage local government units (LGUs), with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to include academe in providing parenting seminars, values formation seminars, and support groups to provide parents knowledge and skills to manage, discipline, and supervise their children.

4. Encourage investigative or response training for barangay officials and tanods as first responder, proper response to minor offense incident. Organize a barangay crime monitoring group that meets regularly for the purpose of documenting incidents, identifying incidents associated with crimes, and planning partnering responses, and interventions.

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