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EFFECTIVENESS OF BARANGAY SECURITY FORCE ON MAINTAINING PEACE AND ORDER AT SELECTED BUSINESS CENTERS IN METRO MANILA

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This study assessed the implementation and perceived effectiveness of the Barangay Security Force (BSF) in maintaining peace and order in Makati Central Business District and Bonifacio Global City, Metro Manila. It examined five dimensions: patrol visibility, crime prevention and deterrence, response to incidents, coordination with security stakeholders, and mediation and conflict resolution. A sequential explanatory mixed-methods design was used. The quantitative phase involved 250 purposively selected respondents: 150 residents, 50 barangay/security personnel, and 50 business stakeholders. The qualitative phase involved nine informants, with three representing each stakeholder group. Survey responses were summarized using medians, and the Kruskal–Wallis H test was used to compare the three groups. Interview data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis. Overall implementation medians indicated that the five dimensions were very much implemented: patrol visibility (3.79), crime prevention and deterrence (3.62), response to incidents (3.69), coordination with security stakeholders (3.36), and mediation and conflict resolution (3.49). For perceived effectiveness, the highest median was recorded for mediation and conflict resolution (3.54), while patrol visibility was 3.33, crime prevention and deterrence 3.39, response to incidents 3.44, and coordination with security stakeholders 3.39. Group comparisons showed significant differences in several dimensions, especially where business stakeholders provided lower ratings than residents and security personnel. Qualitative findings described active patrols, community assistance, mediation, and inter-agency collaboration, while identifying manpower and equipment shortages, complex operating environments, communication barriers, coordination gaps, and community non-cooperation as continuing challenges. The study recommends a resource and capability enhancement program that strengthens patrol deployment, communications, stakeholder coordination, community engagement, conflict-resolution skills, and monitoring.

KEYWORDS: *Barangay Security Force, Peace and Order, Business Centers, Crime Prevention, Metro Manila*

INTRODUCTION

Urban business districts bring together workers, residents, customers, visitors, commercial establishments, and multiple public and private security actors. Their high population mobility and concentrated economic activity create distinct demands for public safety, including the prevention of opportunistic offenses, management of crowds, response to disturbances, traffic assistance, and resolution of interpersonal conflicts. In Metro Manila, Makati Central Business District and Bonifacio Global City are important commercial areas where a safe environment supports daily activity and economic confidence.

At the community level, barangay-based peacekeepers—often referred to as barangay tanods or members of Barangay Peacekeeping Action Teams—provide visible local assistance and support to formal law-enforcement agencies. The Local Government Code of 1991 (Republic Act No. 7160) establishes the local-government context within which barangays exercise responsibilities relevant to peace and order. Barangay security personnel may assist with patrols, incident reporting, crowd management, community coordination, and referral of disputes to appropriate authorities. Their proximity to local settings can help them identify emerging concerns and serve as a bridge between communities and formal agencies.

However, the role of barangay security forces in major business centers differs from their role in primarily residential communities. Business districts often have large daytime populations, transient visitors, private security teams, complex property boundaries, and periods of unusually high pedestrian activity. These conditions can make consistent patrol coverage, timely information-sharing, and coordinated incident response difficult. The actual presence of a security mechanism also does not automatically mean that all stakeholder groups experience it as equally visible or effective.

Community-oriented policing emphasizes problem-solving and cooperation between security providers and the communities they serve. Routine Activity Theory highlights the relevance of capable guardianship in places where people and opportunities converge, while collective-efficacy perspectives underscore the value of shared trust and willingness to act for community safety. These perspectives suggest that BSF performance should be assessed not only by the existence of patrols and procedures but also by how these activities are experienced by residents, business stakeholders, and security personnel.

The dissertation identified a need for context-specific evidence concerning BSF operations in highly commercialized urban settings. This article addresses that gap by assessing five dimensions of implementation and perceived effectiveness in Makati CBD and BGC and by using qualitative accounts to explain the survey patterns. The mixed-methods approach makes it possible to identify both the dimensions that stakeholders generally assess positively and the operational conditions that may limit performance.

The study aimed to assess the effectiveness of the Barangay Security Force in maintaining peace and order at selected business centers in Metro Manila. Specifically, it determined the level of implementation and perceived

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effectiveness in terms of (1) patrol visibility, (2) crime prevention and deterrence, (3) response to incidents, (4) coordination with security stakeholders, and (5) mediation and conflict resolution; tested differences among business stakeholders, residents, and security personnel; explored informants' experiences and identified challenges; and used the combined findings to inform a proposed enhancement program.

The study is practically relevant to barangay officials, local government units, the Philippine National Police, business establishments, and community stakeholders seeking to strengthen locally based security arrangements. Its findings may also contribute to research on community safety in dense commercial environments.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study used a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design. Quantitative data were collected and analyzed first to determine perceived implementation and effectiveness. Qualitative interviews followed to provide contextual explanations for the statistical patterns and to explore operational experiences and challenges that could not be fully captured by survey ratings. Integration occurred during interpretation, when the interview themes were considered alongside the survey results.

Locale and Participants

The study was conducted in Makati Central Business District and Bonifacio Global City, two major business centers in Metro Manila. The quantitative sample comprised 250 respondents selected through purposive sampling: 150 residents, 50 barangay/security personnel, and 50 business stakeholders. The qualitative phase involved nine purposively selected informants, with three participants from each stakeholder group. Selection was based on participants' experience, exposure, or direct involvement in security operations in the study areas.

Phase / group	Number	Role in the study
Quantitative—Residents	150	Provided community-level assessments of BSF implementation and effectiveness.
Quantitative—Security Personnel	50	Provided assessments from the operational/implementer perspective.
Quantitative—Business Stakeholders	50	Provided assessments from the perspective of businesses and commercial activity.
Qualitative Informants	9	Three informants from each of the three stakeholder groups provided explanatory accounts.

Research Instrument and Data Collection

Quantitative data were collected through a structured questionnaire covering the five study dimensions, with separate items addressing the level of implementation and perceived effectiveness. The instrument used a four-point response scale. The dissertation reports Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the implementation dimensions ranging from .860 to .911 and for the effectiveness dimensions ranging from .870 to .932, indicating good to high internal consistency for the respective item sets.

After the required permissions were obtained from relevant officials and administrators, the survey was administered to eligible respondents. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and participation was voluntary. After preliminary quantitative analysis, key informant interviews were conducted to explore experiences with BSF operations and the challenges affecting implementation. Interview responses were reviewed and organized around recurring meanings relevant to the research questions.

Data Analysis

The median was used to summarize responses because the four-point Likert-type data were treated as ordinal. The Kruskal–Wallis H test was used to test whether the three independent respondent groups differed in their assessments. Statistical significance was evaluated at the .05 level. The manuscript reports p-values of .000 for some comparisons; in this article these are expressed as $p < .001$, which is the appropriate reporting convention.

Qualitative responses were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis. The process involved familiarization with the data, generation of initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. The quantitative and qualitative findings were then integrated to provide a more complete interpretation of BSF operations in the selected business centers.

Ethical Considerations

The study reports that informed consent was obtained and that participation was voluntary. Participants were informed of the study's purpose and their right to decline or withdraw. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained, and the collected data were used for academic purposes. Identifying information is not reproduced in this article

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Level of Implementation

The overall medians indicate that BSF functions were assessed as very much implemented across all five dimensions. Patrol visibility obtained the highest implementation median (3.79), followed by response to incidents (3.69), crime prevention and deterrence (3.62), mediation and conflict resolution (3.49), and coordination with security stakeholders (3.36). The pattern suggests that respondents generally recognized active security activities, while coordination was comparatively less strongly rated.

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Dimension	Overall median	Interpretation
Patrol visibility	3.79	Very much implemented
Crime prevention and deterrence	3.62	Very much implemented
Response to incidents	3.69	Very much implemented
Coordination with security stakeholders	3.36	Implemented / very high but comparatively lower
Mediation and conflict resolution	3.49	Implemented / close to the upper category

Patrol visibility's leading median is consistent with informants' descriptions of routine patrols and heightened attention during periods of heavy pedestrian activity. Visible patrols can provide reassurance and may discourage opportunistic misconduct. Nevertheless, the comparatively lower coordination score indicates that visible frontline activity does not necessarily translate into equally strong perceptions of information-sharing and joint planning across agencies and stakeholders.

Response to incidents also received a high implementation median. Informants described personnel as providing immediate assistance, securing incident scenes, recording events, and referring serious matters to the police or other appropriate agencies. These functions are important in crowded business settings, where early control and clear escalation procedures may prevent a minor disturbance from becoming more serious. The findings nevertheless need to be interpreted as stakeholder assessments rather than direct evidence of reductions in crime rates or independently measured response times.

Crime prevention and deterrence was also assessed positively, reflecting perceived implementation of patrols, monitoring, ordinance-related activities, and cooperation with law enforcement. Mediation and conflict resolution received a high rating, reflecting the role of barangay personnel in calming disputes and referring appropriate cases through barangay processes. These results suggest that BSF functions include both visible preventive activity and interpersonal peacekeeping.

Differences in Implementation Ratings

The Kruskal–Wallis results indicate statistically significant differences among the respondent groups for patrol visibility ($H = 129.47$, $p < .001$), crime prevention and deterrence ($H = 73.85$, $p < .001$), response to incidents ($H = 105.978$, $p < .001$), and coordination with security stakeholders ($H = 39.519$, $p < .001$). The difference for mediation and conflict resolution was not statistically significant ($H = 5.589$, $p = .061$).

Dimension	Business stakeholders Mdn	Residents Mdn	Security personnel Mdn	H	p
Patrol visibility	3.09	3.87	3.92	129.47	< .001
Crime prevention and deterrence	3.07	3.76	3.75	73.85	< .001
Response to incidents	3.04	3.77	3.83	105.978	< .001
Coordination with stakeholders	3.07	3.48	3.47	39.519	< .001
Mediation and conflict resolution	3.32	3.59	3.53	5.589	.061

Business stakeholders consistently provided lower implementation ratings than residents and security personnel for patrol visibility, crime prevention, incident response, and coordination. This difference may reflect their practical expectations regarding protection of customers, employees, and commercial activity, as well as their sensitivity to uneven coverage during peak business periods. The findings point to a perception gap that warrants further attention: operational activities may be occurring, but the timing, visibility, or communication of those activities may not be experienced consistently by all groups.

The absence of a statistically significant difference for mediation and conflict resolution suggests more similar assessments across the groups on this dimension. Interview accounts of calm dialogue, listening to disputing parties, and referral of appropriate cases to barangay mechanisms help contextualize this finding. Since the Kruskal–Walli's test is an omnibus test, significant results indicate that at least one group differs; specific pairwise claims should be made only were supported by the dissertation's post-hoc results.

Perceived Effectiveness

All five dimensions were assessed positively, with overall medians interpreted in the dissertation as very much effective. Mediation and conflict resolution obtained the highest median (3.54), followed by response to incidents (3.44), crime prevention and deterrence (3.39), coordination with security stakeholders (3.39), and patrol visibility (3.33). The results suggest that respondents especially recognized the BSF's role in facilitating peaceful resolution of disputes, while patrol visibility and coordination offered areas for continued improvement.

Dimension	Overall median	Interpretation
Patrol visibility	3.33	Very Much Effective
Crime prevention and deterrence	3.39	Very Much Effective
Response to incidents	3.44	Very Much Effective
Coordination with security stakeholders	3.39	Very Much Effective
Mediation and conflict resolution	3.54	Very Much Effective

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The high rating for mediation and conflict resolution is consistent with qualitative accounts describing personnel as encouraging calm discussion, listening to both sides, offering advice, and bringing disputes to the barangay hall when appropriate. These practices may help prevent escalation and support peaceful community-level settlement. The finding does not mean that every dispute is suitable for barangay mediation; serious offenses and matters outside barangay authority must be referred to the appropriate formal agencies.

The effectiveness median for response to incidents was also high. Respondents recognized first-response activities, scene security, documentation, and coordination with police or other authorities. Such functions are particularly relevant in commercial spaces where incidents can involve numerous witnesses and rapidly changing crowd conditions. At the same time, interviewees' reports of limited manpower and equipment indicate that perceived effectiveness is achieved under constraints and may be vulnerable during simultaneous incidents or peak periods.

Differences in Effectiveness Ratings

The dissertation's comparative table showed significant differences across groups for patrol visibility ($H = 12.305$, $p = .002$), crime prevention and deterrence ($H = 8.896$, $p = .012$), response to incidents ($H = 6.284$, $p = .043$), and coordination with security stakeholders ($H = 11.016$, $p = .004$). No significant difference was found for mediation and conflict resolution ($H = 0.705$, $p = .703$).

Dimension	Business stakeholders Mdn	Residents Mdn	Security personnel Mdn	H	p
Patrol visibility	3.16	3.47	3.36	12.305	.002
Crime prevention and deterrence	3.20	3.50	3.43	8.896	.012
Response to incidents	3.29	3.39	3.53	6.284	.043
Coordination with stakeholders	3.50	3.20	3.43	11.016	.004
Mediation and conflict resolution	3.47	3.53	3.56	0.705	.703

The group comparisons show that perceptions vary according to stakeholder role and direct exposure to security activity. For patrol visibility and crime prevention, business stakeholders' ratings were lower than residents' and security personnel's ratings. For incident response, security personnel gave the highest rating. Coordination presented a different pattern: business stakeholders rated it more highly than residents, while security personnel also gave a relatively high assessment. Mediation ratings were similar and the overall group difference was not significant.

These patterns caution against relying exclusively on the views of implementers or any single stakeholder group. The BSF's performance is best understood by combining operational perspectives with the experiences of people who work, live, and conduct business in the areas. Regular feedback and transparent reporting may help identify whether a gap reflects actual service inconsistency, different expectations, or limited visibility of coordination processes.

Qualitative Findings: Experiences of BSF Operations

The interview data described BSF operations as involving several connected functions: active security operations; community engagement and assistance; peaceful mediation and de-escalation; and inter-agency communication and information sharing. Participants described regular patrols, monitoring of suspicious activity, assistance to business owners and visitors, and heightened readiness when large numbers of people were present. These accounts complement the quantitative ratings for patrol visibility and incident response.

Informants also emphasized that BSF personnel are not limited to enforcement. They provide assistance, maintain approachable relationships with community members, help calm minor disputes, and refer incidents that require police action. The descriptions of dialogue and de-escalation are consistent with the comparatively high rating for mediation and conflict resolution. Participants further reported that serious incidents were communicated to the police and that security personnel coordinated with barangay officials and other actors when additional assistance was needed.

Qualitative Findings: Challenges in Implementation

Theme	Description and implication
Resource and manpower constraints	Insufficient personnel, radios, lighting, vehicles, and other equipment can limit patrol coverage and delay responses, especially at night or during peak periods.
Operational and environmental complexity	Crowds, simultaneous events, changing conditions, physical barriers, and potentially hazardous situations make surveillance and incident management more difficult.
Communication and information barriers	Incomplete or unclear witness information can complicate assessment and prolong resolution; dependable communication equipment and reporting protocols are important.
Coordination gaps	Effective response depends on clear roles, timely escalation, reliable contact channels, and sustained cooperation among barangay officials, police, private security, and businesses.
Community non-cooperation	Resistance to instructions, unwillingness to provide information, misinformation, and hostility may complicate crowd management and peaceful resolution.

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The qualitative themes help explain why positive overall assessments coexist with lower ratings from some groups and comparatively lower scores for coordination. Security operations in commercial areas are shaped by structural and situational conditions, not only by individual personnel performance. Inadequate staffing can reduce coverage; difficult environments can increase the number and complexity of incidents; weak information can delay decisions; and community non-cooperation can make interventions more difficult. These conditions may reinforce one another.

The combined findings therefore support a practical emphasis on improving the reliability and visibility of security services, rather than assuming that generally high ratings eliminate the need for development. In particular, business stakeholders' lower ratings in several implementation and effectiveness dimensions indicate the value of structured consultation, clearer communication of patrol schedules and reporting channels, and monitoring that considers stakeholder experience alongside operational records.

Taken together, the quantitative and qualitative findings indicate that the BSF is perceived as an active and generally effective community-level security resource in the selected business centers. Patrols, initial incident response, and mediation were prominent strengths. However, differences among respondent groups and recurring reports of resource, communication, and environmental constraints indicate that performance is not experienced uniformly. The findings align with community-oriented approaches that emphasize partnership and problem-solving, and with routine-activity perspectives that regard visible guardianship as relevant to public safety. They also indicate that capability, coordination, and community cooperation are necessary to translate frontline activity into consistently experienced safety.

Because the study is based on purposively selected respondents and self-reported perceptions in two business centers, the findings should not be interpreted as a causal estimate of the BSF's effect on crime rates. Future research could combine stakeholder surveys with incident records, response-time data, patrol logs, and comparisons across additional locations to assess operational outcomes more directly.

CONCLUSION

The study found that Barangay Security Force functions were generally assessed as very much implemented in Makati Central Business District and Bonifacio Global City. Patrol visibility had the highest implementation median, while coordination with security stakeholders was comparatively lower. Perceived effectiveness was also high across all five dimensions, with mediation and conflict resolution receiving the highest median. These findings suggest that BSF personnel are viewed as contributing to public safety through visible patrols, preventive activity, first response, stakeholder coordination, and peaceful handling of appropriate disputes.

The statistical comparisons revealed meaningful differences among residents, business stakeholders, and security personnel in several dimensions. Business stakeholders tended to provide lower implementation ratings for patrol visibility, crime prevention, response to incidents, and coordination, while perceptions of mediation were more consistent. Effectiveness comparisons also differed by stakeholder group for four dimensions, but not for mediation and conflict resolution. These patterns underscore the importance of incorporating multiple perspectives when evaluating local security services.

Qualitative accounts reinforced the positive assessment of routine operations and mediation while identifying challenges involving limited manpower and equipment, complex commercial environments, communication and information barriers, coordination gaps, and community non-cooperation. The overall conclusion is that the BSF plays a valued role in maintaining peace and order, but sustaining and improving its effectiveness requires investment in operational capability, reliable communication, inter-agency coordination, community engagement, and ongoing evaluation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Local government and barangay officials should assess staffing, deployment patterns, and equipment needs, with particular attention to peak commercial hours, night shifts, and locations with high pedestrian activity.

Barangay officials, the PNP, private security providers, and business stakeholders should establish or strengthen standard operating procedures for incident reporting, escalation, shared contact lists, joint response, and post-incident review.

Regular training should be provided in conflict de-escalation, communication, crowd management, first response, incident documentation, referral procedures, and rights-respecting public engagement.

Barangay and business stakeholders should hold periodic coordination meetings and community-awareness activities to clarify reporting channels, encourage cooperation, and gather feedback on patrol visibility and response experiences.

A monitoring and evaluation system should track patrol coverage, incident response time, quality of reports, coordination activities, equipment readiness, training participation, and stakeholder feedback. Results should be reviewed regularly and used to revise deployment and capability plans.

Future studies should examine additional business centers and, where available, integrate perception data with documented incident statistics, patrol logs, and response-time records. Such work would help distinguish perceived effectiveness from measured operational outcomes.

Proposed Resource and Capability Enhancement Program

Based on the integrated findings, the proposed program aims to strengthen the BSF's operational capacity and community collaboration. Implementation should be adapted to the resources and authority of the concerned local government units and partner agencies.

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Component	Key activities	Suggested lead / partners	Monitoring indicators
Resource and capability assessment	Inventory personnel, equipment, training needs, patrol coverage, and readiness; prepare a prioritized capability plan.	Barangay/LGU, PNP, DILG, DRRMO	Inventory completed; priority gaps documented; procurement and training plan approved.
Patrol visibility improvement	Map high-activity locations; align patrol schedules with peak hours; document deployment and patrol completion.	Punong Barangay, barangay security supervisors, city/municipal government	Patrol logs; deployment coverage; stakeholder feedback; review of reported incidents.
Communication system strengthening	Maintain updated contact lists; improve access to radios/phones and lighting; conduct communication checks and drills.	Barangay officials, IT/communications personnel, PNP and partner agencies	Equipment readiness; communication checks; report completeness; response-time monitoring.
Stakeholder coordination	Hold regular coordination meetings; agree on roles, reporting procedures, escalation routes, and joint response arrangements.	Barangay officials, PNP, private security, business representatives	Meeting attendance; agreed actions completed; records of joint exercises and reviews.
Community engagement and awareness	Conduct briefings on safety reporting, cooperation during incidents, and available complaint/reporting channels.	Barangay officials, business associations, community groups	Participation; feedback; awareness of reporting channels; documented community concerns.
Conflict-resolution and de-escalation training	Provide practical training on communication, mediation limits, referrals, crowd management, and rights-respecting conduct.	Barangay/LGU, PNP, relevant training providers	Training completion; scenario-based assessment; review of incident documentation.
Monitoring and evaluation	Review performance indicators quarterly; consult stakeholders; update resource allocation and procedures.	Barangay/LGU and inter-agency partners	Quarterly monitoring report; actions completed; trends in feedback and response measures.

The program should be implemented in phases, beginning with a resource and capability assessment and proceeding to targeted equipment provision, training, coordination, and monitoring. Budget estimates should be prepared by the responsible local government units after an actual inventory and procurement assessment; this article does not assign new cost figures.

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