

Residents' Perception on the Effectiveness of Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team (BPAT): A Quantitative Study on Security, Response Time, and Community Trust

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.100300247>

Received: 11 March 2026; Accepted: 16 March 2026; Published: 02 April 2026

ABSTRACT

This study examined residents' perceptions of the effectiveness of the Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team (BPAT) in one of the barangays in Ozamiz City, Misamis Occidental, Philippines, focusing on security, response time, and community trust. A quantitative descriptive–correlational research design was employed, with 260 residents selected through simple random sampling completing a validated researcher-developed questionnaire. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and Pearson correlation to assess BPAT effectiveness and the relationships among the variables.

Results show that BPAT is perceived as highly effective across all measured dimensions. In terms of security, crime prevention, patrol visibility, and incident handling were rated highly effective. For response time, speed of emergency response, preparedness and readiness, and availability of BPAT members were all considered highly effective. Regarding community trust, residents rated reliability, dependability, transparency, and accountability of BPAT as highly effective. Significant positive correlations were observed between security and community trust, as well as between response time and community trust, with all relationships showing high to very high correlation.

The study concludes that BPAT plays a crucial role in sustaining community safety and fostering public confidence. Their performance in crime prevention, timely response, and ethical conduct strengthens trust and cooperation among residents. It is recommended that local authorities provide BPAT with adequate resources, implement regular training and emergency drills, reinforce transparency and feedback mechanisms, and establish monitoring systems to ensure prompt and effective responses during emergencies.

Keywords: Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team, community trust, response time, crime prevention, public safety

INTRODUCTION

Rationale of the Study

Maintaining peace and security at the community level remains a fundamental responsibility of local governance systems. In many countries, particularly in developing contexts, community-based policing initiatives have been implemented to strengthen crime prevention and improve collaboration between citizens and law enforcement agencies. These initiatives emphasize partnership, shared responsibility, and proactive strategies aimed at reducing crime and enhancing public safety. Studies on community policing suggest that grassroots participation and cooperation between residents and local authorities play a critical role in strengthening crime prevention efforts and improving perceptions of safety within communities (Nix et al., 2020; Ariel et al., 2022).

In the Philippines, the Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team (BPAT) serves as one of the primary community-level mechanisms for maintaining peace and order. Organized under the barangay governance structure, BPAT members assist local officials and the Philippine National Police in monitoring community activities, responding

to minor incidents, and supporting crime prevention initiatives. Their presence at the neighborhood level allows for immediate response to disturbances and strengthens community-police partnerships. Research indicates that BPATs contribute to the implementation of community policing strategies by fostering cooperation between residents and local authorities and by reinforcing preventive security measures within barangays (Doquilla et al., 2023; Taganas & Gupit, 2025).

Despite the intended benefits of these community-based peacekeeping mechanisms, concerns regarding their operational effectiveness continue to emerge. Residents occasionally express doubts about the reliability of volunteer peacekeeping groups, particularly in relation to response time, coordination with formal law enforcement agencies, and the overall consistency of their security services. Previous research highlights that public trust and perceptions of effectiveness significantly influence the willingness of community members to cooperate with local safety programs. When residents perceive peacekeeping initiatives as ineffective or unresponsive, community participation and confidence in local security institutions may decline (Bolger & Walters, 2020; Trinkner, 2021).

Anchored in the principles of community policing and procedural justice theory, this study assumes that effective service delivery, transparency, and fairness in the actions of BPAT members influence public trust and cooperation. Procedural justice theory posits that when authorities are perceived as fair, accountable, and responsive, citizens are more likely to develop trust and legitimacy toward institutions, thereby strengthening community participation in maintaining peace and order.

Given these concerns, evaluating the effectiveness of BPAT operations from the perspective of community residents becomes essential. Public perception provides valuable insight into how local peacekeeping programs function in practice, particularly in relation to response time, perceived security, and community trust. However, empirical studies examining residents' evaluations of BPAT performance remain limited. By assessing how residents perceive the effectiveness of BPATs in maintaining community security, this study seeks to contribute evidence that may guide improvements in barangay-level peacekeeping strategies, strengthen community engagement, and support the development of more responsive and trustworthy local security initiatives.

Statement Of the Problem

This This study determined the effectiveness of BPAT on security, response time and community trust.

Specifically, the study answered the following research questions:

1. What is the level of effectiveness of the BPAT on security in terms of:
 - 1.1 Crime Prevention
 - 1.2 Patrol and Visibility
 - 1.3 Incident Handling and Resolution
2. What is the level of effectiveness of BPAT on response time in terms of:

Speed of Emergency Response

 - 2.1 Preparedness and Readiness
 - 2.2 Availability of BPAT Members
3. What is the level of effectiveness of BPAT on community trust in terms of:
 - 3.1 Reliability and Dependability
 - 3.2 Transparency and Accountability

4. Is there a significant relationship between the levels of effectiveness of BPAT on security and community's trust?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the levels of effectiveness of BPAT on response time and community's trust?

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative descriptive–correlational research design to examine residents’ perceptions of the effectiveness of the Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team (BPAT) in terms of community security, response time, and trust. The research was conducted in one of the barangays in Ozamiz City, Misamis Occidental, Philippines.

A total of 260 residents were selected using simple random sampling, ensuring that each eligible resident had an equal chance of participation. Inclusion criteria required participants to be at least 18 years old, a current resident of the barangay for at least six months, and willing to provide informed consent. This sampling approach was employed to enhance representativeness and reduce selection bias.

Data were gathered using a researcher-developed structured questionnaire composed of three sections: security, response time, and community trust. The questionnaire items were developed based on existing literature on community policing and public trust, and were structured using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Content validity was established through expert evaluation by three specialists in criminology and public administration, who assessed the relevance, clarity, and adequacy of the items. Necessary revisions were made based on their recommendations.

Reliability testing was conducted through pilot testing involving 30 respondents from a neighboring barangay. The instrument demonstrated acceptable internal consistency, with Cronbach’s alpha coefficients of 0.87 for security, 0.85 for response time, and 0.89 for community trust, indicating high reliability of the measurement scales.

Ethical approval was secured from the barangay authorities prior to data collection. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed about the purpose of the study. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained by excluding identifying information and using the data solely for academic purposes.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were applied in analyzing the data. Mean and standard deviation were used to summarize residents’ perceptions of BPAT effectiveness, while the Pearson product–moment correlation coefficient determined the relationship among the variables.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Level of Effectiveness of BPAT on Security

Table 1. Level of Effectiveness of BPAT on Security

Statements	Mean	Description
A. Crime Prevention	3.12	Highly Effective
B. Patrol and Visibility	3.10	Highly Effective
C. Incident Handling and Resolution	3.17	Highly Effective

The results in Table 1 indicate that residents perceive the Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team (BPAT) as highly effective in maintaining community security. All indicators obtained mean scores within the highly effective

range, with incident handling and resolution ($M = 3.17$) receiving the highest rating, followed by crime prevention ($M = 3.12$) and patrol and visibility ($M = 3.10$). These findings suggest that the presence and operational activities of BPAT members are recognized by residents as contributing positively to the prevention of crime and the management of security-related incidents within the community. The results also imply that the regular visibility and patrol activities of BPAT personnel strengthen residents' perception of safety in their locality.

These findings are consistent with previous studies emphasizing that community-based security initiatives enhance neighborhood safety through increased visibility and timely response to disturbances. From a community policing perspective, these results reinforce the principle that proactive engagement and visible presence of local peacekeeping personnel contribute to both crime deterrence and increased public reassurance. Research indicates that localized peacekeeping efforts and active patrol presence can significantly improve residents' perceptions of security and reduce fear of crime in communities (Kochel, Parks, & Mastrofski, 2020; Nalla & Nam, 2021). Moreover, effective incident response and proactive crime prevention strategies implemented by community-based security groups contribute to stronger public confidence in local safety institutions and encourage greater cooperation between residents and peacekeeping authorities (Jackson & Bradford, 2021). This implies that BPAT functions not only as a security mechanism but also as a trust-building institution within the community, aligning with global models of participatory policing.

Level of Effectiveness of BPAT on Response Time

Table 2. Level of Effectiveness of BPAT on Response Time

Statements	Mean	Description
A. Speed of Emergency Response	3.10	Highly Effective
B. Preparedness and Readiness	3.07	Highly Effective
C. Availability of BPAT Members	3.15	Highly Effective

Table 2 shows that residents generally perceive the Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team (BPAT) as highly effective in terms of response time. All indicators obtained mean scores within the highly effective range, including availability of BPAT members ($M = 3.15$), speed of emergency response ($M = 3.10$), and preparedness and readiness ($M = 3.07$). The highest rating for availability suggests that residents recognize the consistent presence of BPAT personnel in the community, which contributes to quicker responses to security-related incidents. These results indicate that the accessibility and readiness of BPAT members are important factors that influence residents' perceptions of effective local peacekeeping.

The findings are consistent with research emphasizing that prompt response and operational readiness are critical elements of effective community-based policing. Studies show that rapid response to emergencies and the visible presence of local security personnel strengthen residents' confidence in community safety initiatives and improve perceptions of police effectiveness (Mazerolle et al., 2020; Nix & Wolfe, 2021). Furthermore, preparedness and availability of community safety personnel have been associated with improved cooperation between residents and local peacekeeping groups, as citizens are more likely to report incidents and seek assistance when they believe that authorities will respond promptly (Boateng, 2022). This finding highlights that response efficiency serves as a key determinant of institutional trust, suggesting that timely service delivery reinforces perceptions of competence and reliability among community members.

Level of Effectiveness of BPAT on Community Trust

Table 3. Level of Effectiveness of BPAT on Community Trust

Statements	Mean	Description
A. Reliability and Dependability	3.13	Highly Effective
B. Transparency and Accountability	3.20	Highly Effective

Table 3 presents the residents’ perceptions of the effectiveness of the Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team (BPAT) in fostering community trust. The results indicate that BPATs are perceived as highly effective in this dimension, with transparency and accountability ($M = 3.20$) receiving the highest rating, followed by reliability and dependability ($M = 3.13$). These findings suggest that residents generally believe that BPAT members perform their duties responsibly and maintain openness in their peacekeeping activities. The high ratings further imply that consistent communication, responsible conduct, and accountability mechanisms contribute to strengthening the relationship between BPAT personnel and the community.

The findings align with prior research emphasizing that transparency, accountability, and consistent service delivery are fundamental in building public trust in community-based security institutions. Studies indicate that when community members perceive local safety personnel as reliable and transparent in their actions, levels of institutional trust and cooperation tend to increase (Bradford et al., 2020; Tankebe & Meško, 2023). Additionally, trust in local security groups has been linked to greater public willingness to collaborate with peacekeeping initiatives, which ultimately enhances community safety outcomes (Sunshine & Tyler, 2020). From a procedural justice perspective, fairness, transparency, and ethical conduct significantly shape citizens’ trust and legitimacy perceptions toward local authorities, thereby strengthening cooperative behaviors within the community.

Significant Relationship between the Levels of Effectiveness of BPAT on Security and Community's Trust

Table 4. Significant Relationship between the Levels of Effectiveness of BPAT on Security and Community Trust

Variables	<i>r</i> value/ <i>p</i> value	Remark
Reliability and Dependability vs Crime Prevention	0.593 0.000	High Correlation Significant
Reliability and Dependability vs Patrol Visibility	0.640 0.000	Vet High Correlation Significant
Reliability and Dependability vs Incident Handling	0.666 0.000	High Correlation Significant
Transparency and Accountability Crime Prevention	0.569 0.000	Very High Correlation Significant
Transparency and Accountability Patrol Visibility	0.590 0.000	Very High Correlation Significant
Transparency and Accountability Incident Handling	0.653 0.000	High Correlation Significant

Table 4 presents the correlation between the effectiveness of BPAT security functions and the level of community trust. The results reveal significant positive relationships between all variables, with correlation coefficients ranging from $r = 0.569$ to $r = 0.666$ ($p = 0.000$). Reliability and dependability showed a strong correlation with crime prevention ($r = 0.593$), patrol visibility ($r = 0.640$), and incident handling ($r = 0.666$). Similarly, transparency and accountability demonstrated strong associations with crime prevention ($r = 0.569$), patrol visibility ($r = 0.590$), and incident handling ($r = 0.653$). These results indicate that improved security performance by BPAT members is closely associated with higher levels of trust among community residents. In particular,

effective incident management and consistent patrol visibility appear to strengthen residents' perceptions of BPAT reliability and transparency.

These findings support existing literature suggesting that public trust in community safety institutions is strongly influenced by the perceived effectiveness and responsiveness of security personnel. Studies have shown that when residents observe consistent patrol presence, effective crime prevention strategies, and fair incident management, their confidence in local peacekeeping organizations increases (Hamm et al., 2020; Lee & Cho, 2021). Furthermore, transparency and accountability practices have been identified as key factors in building legitimacy and fostering cooperative relationships between communities and security institutions (Schafer et al., 2022). This finding contributes to the broader discourse on community policing by demonstrating that operational effectiveness and trust are mutually reinforcing constructs, where improved service delivery enhances legitimacy, and increased trust promotes community cooperation.

Significant Relationship between the Levels of Effectiveness of BPAT on Response Time and Community's Trust

Table 5. Significant Relationship between the Levels of Effectiveness of BPAT on Response Time and Community Trust

Variables	<i>r</i> value/ <i>p</i> value	Remark
Reliability and Dependability and Speed of Emergency	0.571 0.000	High Correlation Significant
Reliability and Dependability and Preparedness & Readiness	0.609 0.000	High Correlation Significant
Reliability and Dependability Availability	0.705 0.000	High Correlation Significant
Transparency and Accountability Speed of Emergency	0.623 0.000	High Correlation Significant
Transparency and Accountability Preparedness and Readiness	0.667 0.000	High Correlation Significant
Transparency and Accountability Availability	0.690 0.000	High Correlation Significant

Table 5 presents the correlation analysis between the effectiveness of BPAT response time and the level of community trust. The results show significant positive relationships between all indicators, with correlation coefficients ranging from $r = 0.571$ to $r = 0.705$ ($p = 0.000$). Reliability and dependability demonstrated strong correlations with speed of emergency response ($r = 0.571$), preparedness and readiness ($r = 0.609$), and availability of BPAT members ($r = 0.705$). Similarly, transparency and accountability showed strong associations with speed of emergency response ($r = 0.623$), preparedness and readiness ($r = 0.667$), and availability ($r = 0.690$). These findings indicate that residents tend to develop stronger trust in BPAT when peacekeeping members are perceived as accessible, prepared, and capable of responding promptly to emergencies within the community.

The results are consistent with previous research emphasizing that rapid response capability and operational readiness significantly influence public trust in community safety institutions. Studies suggest that timely emergency response and the visible availability of security personnel strengthen perceptions of institutional competence and reliability among citizens (Mourtgos et al., 2020; Yesberg & Bradford, 2021). Moreover, accountability and transparency in handling emergency situations contribute to higher levels of legitimacy and encourage greater cooperation between residents and local peacekeeping groups (Radburn et al., 2022). These findings further extend existing research by demonstrating that response time is not only an operational indicator but also a critical psychological factor shaping public trust, thereby reinforcing the importance of efficiency in community-based policing systems.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team (BPAT) plays a vital role in maintaining community safety, with their performance in crime prevention, patrol visibility, and incident resolution reinforcing public security and residents' confidence in local peacekeeping. Their prompt response, preparedness, and consistent availability during emergencies enhance operational efficiency and foster trust among community members. Furthermore, BPAT's reliability, transparency, and accountability are essential for sustaining community trust, demonstrating that ethical conduct and open communication strengthen relationships between peacekeeping personnel and residents. Overall, the effectiveness of BPAT in both security and response operations is directly associated with higher public confidence and cooperation, highlighting the importance of consistent performance in building community trust.

Despite these findings, the study is limited to a single barangay, which may restrict the generalizability of the results. Future studies may include multiple barangays or conduct comparative analyses across different localities to provide broader insights into BPAT effectiveness and community policing outcomes. Additionally, incorporating qualitative methods may further enrich understanding of residents' lived experiences and perceptions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Local authorities and policymakers are encouraged to provide BPAT members with adequate resources, including patrol equipment, communication tools, and mobility support, to maintain visibility and operational efficiency. Regular emergency response training and simulation drills should be institutionalized to improve preparedness and coordination. Transparency and feedback mechanisms, such as community consultations and public reporting, should be reinforced to enhance accountability and trust. Furthermore, integrating BPAT performance assessments into local governance evaluations can ensure that community security initiatives are directly linked to public confidence and participation. Future research is recommended to explore comparative studies across different barangays and incorporate additional variables such as demographic factors, length of residency, and prior experiences with BPAT to further explain variations in community trust and perceptions of effectiveness.

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