

Community based policing practices in preventing and countering violent extremism

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Abstract

This study assessed the implementation of the Community Based Policing Practices (CBPP) in preventing and countering violent extremism in a local government unit specifically in terms of Community Engagement, Intelligence Gathering and Police Presence. The stakeholder's participation, challenges encountered in implementing CBPP were also determined. An increased number of undocumented migrant Muslims in Pajac village, Lapulapu City that have posed the community at risk for violent extremist groups that may lurk in the area. An increased number of subdivisions and housing areas also add up to the effect of high social mobility that increased the demand for safety and security in the village. The local government of Pajac village manifests initiatives in countering and preventing violent extremism however it was rarely observed by the stakeholders particularly to both non - Muslim and Muslim residents. Preemptive initiatives are limited to meetings and dialogues with the people's organizations and other informal leaders. Stakeholder participation is also limited to, collaborative meetings with the same groups. There are preemptive activities conducted in the village however there were no responsive strategies that will address the risk or presence of violent extremists. It is hoped that a more collaborative participation across all stakeholders to address safety and security threats should be strengthened to promote a more responsive practice in countering violent extremism.

Keywords: Community based policing practices, violent extremism, community engagement, intelligence gathering, police presence

1.0 Introduction

The biggest challenge facing the police is finding a way to engage the common people, how to gain their trusts and cooperation in making lives safer and more pleasant through gained integrity and respect. In many cases, the police need to engage in community building and development.

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The community needs to develop a sense of convergence and to work with the police to solve social problems. Extremism, as an ideology, manifests terrorist behavior. Martin (2010) writes “radical in opinion, especially in political matter is characterized by intolerance toward opposing interests and divergent opinions.”

Violent extremism comes about when people or organizations actively express their political convictions by way of vehemently insinuating violence or through open violent manifestation by themselves (Kirshner, 2012). Every terrorist works through a network of friends and acquaintances in their own environment pushing to inject violent extremism under a complex process. It is then imperative for those working to counter terrorism to enjoin communities in the implementation of their advocacies and initiatives, promote transparency and the sharing of information for the benefit of community (Maslov, 2015). More importantly, this approach promotes the recognition of individuals who are vulnerable to abuse and keep them away from being manipulated to the left wing (Weisburd and Amram, as cited in Gunaratna, 2013).

The best way to counter terrorism is through holistic and community-based efforts amidst limited resources of professional and committed law enforcers. Along the multitude of challenges facing society, the often-unseen cycle of radicalization can place anywhere and anytime in communities, where potential terrorists emanate, narrowing the State’s capability to identify and interrupt the course towards violent extremism (Gunaratna, 2013). Ideally, community policing not only answers neighborhood issues but also empowers rather controlling the community (Grabosky, 2009). This is founded on the premise that only by working with local communities where the police can protect them thereby increase the quality of life among member residents.

In essence, the police need to assume heightened roles and do their duties proactively. Apart from being law enforcers, they may also become advisors, facilitators, advocates and representatives for collective productive community-based initiatives (Maslov, 2015). The police can concretely work as being part of the community rather than being only seen as detached individuals in the neighborhood.

Ideally, community policing commences at the grassroots level going its way up, instead of a top-down approach to address terrorism challenges. As a result, the police become pro-active participants in delivering their duties and services to the community (Kappeler and Gaines, 2012). This community-based initiative can help local policy-makers and community residents in identifying their problems and develop collective solutions for community well-being (Vivar, Salvador and Abocejo, 2015) which can reduce the risk of violent extremism. More effectively, this can enhance relationship building, information sharing and cooperation with the local people, in view of emphasizing overall improvement in the quality of community life (Grabosky, 2009). Consequently, improved community life ensures that the most vulnerable groups, the children, youth and the elderly are protected (Alvarez, Ong and Abocejo, 2017). Essentially, community policing is put in place where local people become valuable police resource valued as tangible partners in the police process. Along this way, the local government through the local leaders (i.e. village chairman and officials) in their specific area of responsibility (AOR) are expected to provide information to law enforcers any suspicious person within their jurisdiction.

However, it has been observed that not all LGUs nor the community has a strong collaboration and coordination with the police force. Gaps like lack of knowledge, lack of funds and fear of vulnerability to crime are some reasons for the weak implementation of community based policing. In Lapulapu City, Philippines, a police operation in 2014 led to an arrest of an Australian national identified as an extremist (The Guardian, 2014). It has been noted that the said perpetrator was hiding and planning for alleged extremist activities in Pajac Village, Lapulapu City, Philippines since the said village has been home to hundreds of Muslim migrants from

Mindanao. Lapulapu as an independent and highly urbanized city of the Province of Cebu, is considered as an entry and exit point of foreign and domestic travelers. Aside from being a progressive city, the Mactan Cebu International Airport (MCIA) is located here making the island a breeding ground for extremists.

After the recent Marawi siege, local government units (LGUs) as well as other response organizations have put their attention towards preparing and responding to domestic terrorism threats (Divinagracia, 2018). Even if several intelligence information is at hand about the presence of ISIS in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), a strong community collaboration is needed to strengthen preemptive measures. The example of the ‘bayanihan’ practice of Bohol, where the community immediately informed the authorities of a suspected insurgent is an example that if the residents are responsive to threats, policing is highly effective (Torres, 2011). This paper hopes to provide strategic initiatives to strengthen community policing.

1.1 Study objectives

This study investigated the implementation of the community based policing practices (CBPP) in preventing and countering violent extremism in a local government unit, in Cebu, central Philippines. Specifically, it assessed the characteristics of community engagement, intelligence gathering and police presence in the community and intelligence hardening. The study also determined the stakeholder’s participation and encountered problems and challenges in the implementation of CBPP.

2.0 Literature Review

Extremism is the predecessor of terrorism, insurgency and other forms of political unrest. By all means, extremism has to be countered and moderated if not eliminated so that extremist ideologies cannot jeopardize the peaceful functioning of any society (Gunaratna, 2013). Ideologically driven extremists with the same degree for terrorists and insurgents are capable of politicizing, radicalizing and mobilizing the most vulnerable segments of society (Davis, Larson, Haldeman, Oguz and Rana, 2012). Such societal segments can emerge as potential groups to be recruited by terrorist organized groups.

Terrorists usually target to recruit local communities and the government can reduce this threat by providing supports and ensuring strong presence in the local community (Habulan et al., 2018). When communities are set aside without concrete and productive engagements, the threat may persist and even grow. So that strong community engagement is vital to defeat terrorism and its antecedent extremism with operational and productive community-based initiatives (Gunaratna, 2013). Hence, government and citizen partnership is essential to counter organized terrorism threats (Davis et al., 2012). Only upon forging a common understanding that enduring stability and peace can be achieved. Indeed, consultations, mutually productive involvement and partnership between the government and with diverse communities is paramount (Abocejo and Gubalane, 2013).

On a wider scale, government’s presence is crucial in creating and maintaining a devoted relationship with the community, not only with formal but also informal representatives (Das, 2016). The government needs to define and appreciate the complexities of a local community (its existence, demographics, socio-economic conditions, history, ethos, culture and interests), participate in consultations, build meaningful working relationships, informed decision-making in planning processes to resolve problems thereby bring about change (Abocejo, 2017).

The established relationship needs to be mutually beneficial with interactions penetrating the hearts and minds of participating groups. There has to be careful monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the system. Once stabilized and financially assisted, this transformative relationship forms the foundation for a stable community and efficient government (Maslov, 2015). Through appropriate identification of different groups within the community, the government is able to provide resources and assistance from able and willing-to-help partners (Habulan et al., 2018). For instance, the private sector can be given assignments it is capable of performing. Where the government lacks resources, the private sector may step in and help implement concrete community engagement initiatives (Gunaratna, 2013).

Kappeler and Gaines (2012) suggested that community involvement should come along with an essence of necessity, awareness of the values and social structures which define the society, with insight into how social, economic and political change may affect the culture and hallmarks of effective community policing. While it is obviously true that violent crime deserves priority concerns, the existing system often fails to recognize the importance of taking personal and social problems equally seriously (Kappeler and Gaines, 2012).

The police are trained to deal with people and activities that are outside the bounds of the existing social and moral order (National Research Council, 2004). Although there are numerous public and private agencies that deal with societal problems such as poverty, unemployment, gender and development (Abocejo et al., 2012), or public health, human trafficking (Zamir and Hasisi, 2014; Dela Serna, Ferrer and Abocejo, 2017) the police seem to be the agency of last resort. Several police problems are neither triggered by deviant nor violent criminals, rather they are caused by social conditions which arise directly from weak political will (Evangelio and Abocejo, 2015) and inconsistent public policies. Sometimes it can be said that most “police problems” began their life as “political problems” that were pushed upon the police (Zamir and Hasisi, 2014). In many cases, the police cannot just exclusively rely on the pretense of service and community engagement, it has to consider the spirit of service, responsibility and responsiveness (Vivar, Salvador and Abocejo (2015). Police organization is about how to structure the department so that goals and objectives are achieved. From the community policing philosophy, organizing the police is about structuring the department so that community goals and objectives are achieved (Kappeler and Gaines, 2012).

O’Brien (2012) emphasized collaborative governance which can address community problems where governance arrangement may be form among government, community and perhaps, non-state stakeholders in a “collective decision-making process. This comes as oriented formal consensus with deliberate goal of executing public policy and managing public programs. Hence, the village officials in Lapulapu City, Philippines can put into consideration the engagement and involvement of the community, NGO’s and other stakeholders in crafting community-based policing practices within their area of responsibility.

In polycentric governance (Ruggie, 2014), the government itself cannot be left alone to do the works in addressing the pressing societal challenges and it needs the participation of stakeholders and actors to strengthen and solidify its capability. In so doing, responsive regulation, mutual cooperation, public-private partnership and multi-stakeholder processes are emphasized.

In the previous half of the century, the neighborhood of schools and churches markedly influenced the community (Bursik and Grasmick, as cited in Kappeler and Gaines, 2012). This present time, such social institutions’ influences are no longer felt in many neighborhoods, reducing their positive impact on people and on communities (Habulan et al., 2018).

There is also the mechanism of public social control which involves the active police and other government agencies seen as the last line of defense in a community (Habulan et al., 2018).

It is acknowledged that without the community's support and help, the police will find it difficult to prevent violence, delinquency and deviant behaviors. The police can only be effective and efficient if they work hand in hand with community members in strengthening private social control within high-crime areas (Maslov, 2015).

Neighborhood structure contributed to the high crime rates. These neighborhoods with high levels of disorder (broken windows) will exhibit a constant turnover of residents and social networking. In effect, there is loose guardianship or sense of community which can give impetus to undesired crimes and disorders (Davis et al., 2012). In most if not all, communities with the high crime rates are those with large proportions of rental property and where residents' turnovers are frequent. Social disorganization is a significant factor of crime incidence (Shaw and McKay's, as cited in Kappeler and Gaines, 2012).

The State, as a governing organization of a country, provides healthy and self-satisfying living environment for the people (Maslov, 2015). Its leadership and direction provides a clear statement to the people in providing supportive programs for the general welfare. However, by way of formal and informal linkages, the government can look upon the involvement of other stakeholders like the media and non-government organizations (NGOs) particularly the academe and legal communities (Habulan et al., 2018). The government cannot ignore this organization as they are effective in addressing immediate concern for societal welfare and can convey appropriate information for a good community-based policing practices (Maslov, 2015).

When community policing became a standard in many other countries, it has been ingrained throughout police departments as managers attempt to develop strategies and tactics to deal with day-to-day issues and community problems (Wisler and Onwudiwe, 2010). However, even with this remarkable development, many people still do not exactly know what "community policing" is and what it can achieve, both within and outside the police forces. Notwithstanding everybody already heard of community policing, and most police departments say that they have adopted the philosophy, few actually understand how it works and the possibilities it has for police agencies and communities. Indeed, it is viewed from a number of different perspective (Zamir and Hasisi, 2014).

Part of the community policing mission is to understand the behavior of people living in the same neighborhood by recognizing how they share a network of shared values and common interests (Habulan et al., 2018) to enhance the quality of community life. Ironically, the threat of crime or even terrorism can be a catalyst to make people see that they do share a community of interest based on mutual geography (Kappeler and Gaines, 2012). In a community, unless fear is transformed into positive change, there is a danger of it to degenerate into apathy, social alienation, or even vigilantism and rioting (Davis et al., 2012). Community policing provided the opportunity to use crime apprehension as a catalyst for enhancing the the quality of life in a neighborhood (Kappeler and Gaines, 2012).

2.1 Theoretical background and legal bases

The Institutional Theory (IT), advocated by Meyer and Rowan (as cited in Laurence and Shadnam, 2008), argues that institutions like government entities are social structures formed in terms of financial, economic, and symbolic frameworks where they are situated, rather than organized instruments for effective work. These institutions are shaped by factors like concepts, perceptions, beliefs, agreed information, and laws about their proper structure and activities in society (Smith, Santos, & Santos, 2017). with planning and control that lead to operational efficiency and effectiveness (Vivar, Salvador and Abocejo, 2015)

Shaw and McKay's (as cited in Kappeler and Gaines, 2012) Social Disorganization Theory (SDT) on the other hand describes that delinquency and crime rates are higher in inner city areas and for those with high levels of population turnover. Crime may persist in these areas over time when there is a high population turnover (Habulan et al., 2018). Impoverished communities will eventually migrate into the city, allowing them to boost their socio-economic status over time and move to other more prosperous areas, usually middle-class neighborhoods (Abocejo, 2015).

Meanwhile, New Public Service (NPS) movement as espoused by Denhardt and Denhardt (2015) focused on advancing the dignity and worth of public service. They posited that the NPS fosters cooperative efforts from the grassroots and encourages civic participation through collaborative initiatives. It aims to strengthen the delivery of public goods to the citizens because this is what public officials are for; and not for any other reason. With the NPS, public officials are servant and not managers. They pursue public interest more than the consciousness of cost efficiency and effectivity. The NPS treats the populace as citizens, not as consumers. Indeed, the foundation of NPS is rooted on the belief that the soul of public administration is public service.

Moreover, the NPS advocate perceive the conception of public interest as an end result of a dialogue on shared values. It considers coalitions, non-profit organizations and non-government organizations as mechanism for achieving policy objectives. Finally, it pushes for collaborative organizational structures, with leadership being shared both internally and externally. Indeed, cooperation is the name of the game.

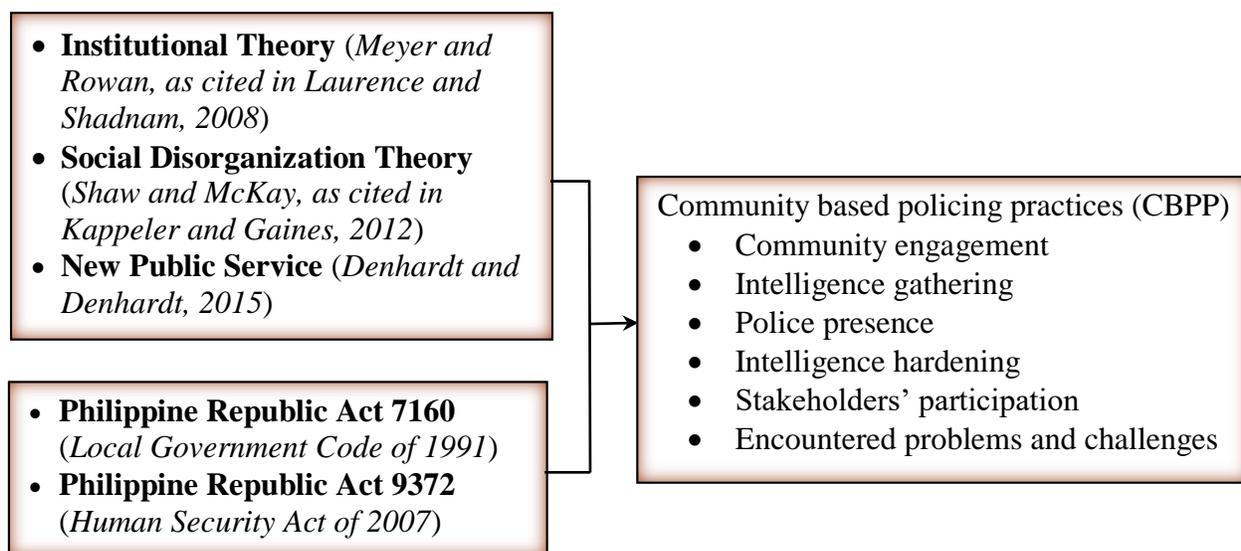


Figure 1. Theoretical and conceptual framework of the study

Section 384, Book III, Title I, Chapter I of Republic Act 7160 otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991, states that the village, “*as the basic political unit, shall serve as the primary planning and implementing unit of government policies, plans, programs, projects, and activities in the community, and as a forum wherein the collective views of the people may be expressed, crystallized and considered, and where disputes may be amicably settled.*” The village then stands at the forefront of public service delivery at the grassroots level. The planners and implementers of government programs, plans, policies, projects and initiatives are the village officials, both the elective and appointive officials.

Recent events demonstrate that terrorism is a global threat and a “*clear and present danger*” for the Philippines. Thus, the Philippine Congress enacted RA 9372, otherwise known as

the Human Security Act (HSA) of 2007. This legislation was among the country's initial responses to the international anti-terrorism effort. Former Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo gave the country's commitment in the global campaign against terrorism and placed the Philippines at the forefront in the fight against the global scourge of terrorism (Davis et al., 2012). In relation to this, Title 1, Section 2. RA 8551 declared that a police force which is competent and highly efficient shall be established by the government with national scope and civilian in nature whose control and administration shall be assigned to the National Police Commission.

3.0 Research Methodology

This study was implemented following a descriptive survey research design using both quantitative and qualitative approaches in analyzing community-based policing practices in view of preventing and countering violent extremism. Secondary data sources were gathered from the local government of Lapulapu City and the village of Pajac. The data were on village development plans, ordinances, LGU resolutions, among others. Primary sources of data were obtained from key informants (KI) of qualified stakeholders and focused group discussions (FGD) from selected Muslim and Christian residents in the village of Pajac. The KIs were as follow: village chairman, village local officials, village police, the Lapulapu Chief of police, media representative, a businessman, an Imam (Muslim priest) and an educator. The KIs were purposively chose from the identified study population.

The study was implemented in the village of Pajac, Lapulapu City, selected based on the presence of large number of Muslim migrants, presence of a Mosque, and a recorded apprehension of a suspected Muslim extremist in 2014. Lapulapu city has a population of around three hundred thousand and was declared a highly urbanized city since 2007 with bustling economic activities. Lapulapu city is linked Cebu mainland by two bridges and is home to the second busiest airport in the Philippines, the Mactan-Cebu International Airport (MCIA)

A researcher made unstructured interview guide was used in the study to gathered the primary needed data from the KIs and from the FGD participants. The 2nd tool utilized was a 4-point Likert scale questionnaire to describe the level of implementation of the CBPP. The 3rd tool was another Likert scale instrument that measures the degree of seriousness of the problems encountered by the stakeholders in implementing CBPP that is measured based on responses presented in table 1-B

Prior to actual field interviews and survey, the questionnaire was translated into the vernacular, validated and pilot-tested to two sample village residents in Cebu City and to one university professor in political science. A record sheet was also used to record secondary data from the local government. Camera and voice recorder were utilized. Transmittal letters were forwarded to KIs and research participants. Upon approval, informed consent was secured from the respondents to ensure appropriate ethical considerations. To validate the responses, triangulation was also conducted through the conduct of focus group discussion or FGD. Data collected were treated with utmost confidentiality.

4.0 Results and Discussion

The discussion that follows puts emphasis on the existing community based policing practices (CBPP) and provide analysis on their implementation as spearheaded by the police force in tandem with the local government unit of Pajac village. Interpretations and implications are provided to

substantiate discussions of findings which are geared towards addressing the aforementioned study objectives.

4.1 Community engagement

The local government unit of village Pajac, Lapulapu City, Philippine have conducted regular visitations and community immersions to monitor every suburb and sub-village of the said village. Regular dialogue and monthly meetings are also conducted where the suburb and Muslim Leaders, according to the local leaders, regularly attend and are very cooperative. In fact, the village Captain affirmed: “when we call the village leaders for a dialogue they are very cooperative”.

During these dialogues, suburb and Muslim leaders are expected to share some updates and improvements within their areas particularly on the welfare of the community, safety and security threats. Issues and problems in the sub-village are also discussed where the village officials and committees brainstorm on immediate solutions in addressing their concerns. Das (2016) emphasized that formal and informal engagement by the government, in particular the police force, can help establish strong rapport with the community. This partnership may entail between diverse communities and between governments. In this sense, democracy is established where the community, regardless of affiliation, political and religious beliefs, are convened to discuss community development issues.

In fact, the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) has encouraged all local government units (LGUs) to practice the “Purok System” or suburb system as an effective tool for community engagement that can also address the social inequities of the locality. Sub-village micro problems like drugs, curfew and extremism threats are discussed with the stakeholders. Collaborative governance is then implemented through effective communication exchanges between the LGU and the community. After all, the true nature of local governance is “bringing the government closer to the people” (Buire, 2011). In this sense, no one knows better the needs of the community but the village people themselves.

In terms of engaging the youths, officials of Pajac Village tap the schools and also the village Council for Child Protection. This means that the village Council for Protection of Children allocated one percent of the village’s budget. With the help of the village officials, the council come up programs and activities for the youths. Besides, there is a concern about human trafficking that proliferates in the island of Mactan and in the adjacent Cebu City (Abocejo and Gubalane, 2013). It was emphasized by Reliefweb (2017) that youth are at particular risk of being recruited into extremist groups so local peacebuilding organizations should focus on this target group during programming. In addition, the village officials of Pajac village in collaboration with the Cebu Technological University (CTU), conduct livelihood programs such as candle making among others, in return, schools in Pajac village will look for prospective markets where they can sell the products made of recycled materials.

Through this program, the out of school youths become engaged in community activities where they can also earn money and acquire new skills necessary for employment. The activities can greatly prevent recruitment of the youth or luring them to join violent extremist. Empowering the youth by increasing their employability and entrepreneurial skills to earn a living make an effective way of making them productive away from vulnerability to undesirable activity involvement. Reliefweb (2017) suggested that the youth can be protected if local organizations could focus on areas where they can be offered a network where the youth feel the sense of belonging and a purpose in life.

According to one of the village Councilors, the youths who are part of the Muslim community are currently studying in the primary and secondary levels. There are instances that

they will request to use the covered court during graduations which the village chairman always approve since they are also members of the community. This implies that there is no discrimination and stereotyping in the community and the LGU of Pajac village. There are also times that the village chairman is invited to some Muslim activities and programs.

By occupation, the number one source of income of Muslims in Pajac is being tricycle drivers. While there are some who sell DVDs, clothes, and slippers in the local market. Many of them came from Pajac village with some coming from city center and Basak village of Lapulapu City.

The village Captain mentioned that when invited by the Muslim community, he will always attend and sometimes brings a colleague or a friend with him not because he is afraid of them but because he wants to engage with the community. He added that it is one way of building connection and good relationship with them. Truly, it is good when the community sees the sincerity of the village Chairman.

As to the extent of implementation level of community engagement in the study area, findings showed a grand mean of 2.65 (Table 1) suggesting a less visible community engagement as confirmed by the research respondents. During the focus group discussion (FGD), the researchers presented the list of community policing activities in the area, but the Muslim and non-Muslim community members affirmed that such activities are rarely seen happening in the village.

Table 1. Implementation of police community engagement

Indicator	Muslim Community	Non-Muslim Community	Village Officials	Mean	Description
The LGU conducts community activities that promote holistic development like sports and summer leagues for the youth	3.13	3.05	3.00	3.06	MI
The LGU initiates livelihood programs in collaboration with NGO, Business and other sectors in the city/community	2.80	2.86	3.00	2.89	MI
The village officials conducts monthly meetings with the suburb and other community leaders.	2.87	2.81	2.63	2.77	MI
The village officials regularly visits/monitors the??	3.00	2.57	1.63	2.40	SI
The LGU conducts regular dialogue with the Muslim and Non-Muslim community residents.	2.87	1.76	1.75	2.13	SI
Grand mean				2.65	SI

Ranges for the weighted mean

1.00 – 1.89

1.90 – 2.79

2.80 – 3.39

3.40 – 4.00

Description

Not Implemented (NI)

Slightly Implemented (SI)

Moderately Implemented (MI)

Highly Implemented (HI)

As shown in Table 1, monthly meetings (weighted mean = 2.77), sports and community activities (weighted mean = 3.06) and livelihood programs are moderately implemented per respondents' affirmation based on the conducted study survey. Sports activities and summer leagues for youths are moderately implemented (weighted mean = 3.06). This implies that sports activities such as basketball and summer leagues had been spearheaded in the village by respective

officials where the youths, especially the out-of-school youths, can participate instead of roaming around the streets and engaging themselves in illegal activities.

This is also one way of encouraging the students to participate to the various activities of the village. By being preoccupied and feel a sense of belongingness, they will not be vulnerable to recruitments by any extremist group. The youth are vital for nation-building so that their involvement should be given importance. Experience demonstrates that sport activities are low-cost but yield high-impact result for strengthening development objectives at broad range. By embracing sport initiatives as innovative tools for peace development, the government can strengthen its efforts to overcome peace development challenges (Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport and Commonwealth Secretariat, 2014).

Furthermore, the conduct of regular visits and monitoring by the village officials (weighted mean = 2.40) and regular dialogue (weighted mean = 2.13) were seen as less implemented by the stakeholders (Table 1). This implies that the dialogue and field visits conducted by village Officials are not regularly implemented as mandated. It was suggested that heightened efforts in promoting and sustaining dialogue between warring parties must be effected to prevent major violent extremism from happening (United Nations, 2016). The study found out that only few of the Non-Muslim respondents have knowledge on this activity in the village. The involvement of the various residents on the community requires a unified effort; however, political will and dedication also plays a crucial role. It is stated by Elworthy and Rifkind (2006) that preventing terrorism requires more effective interventions to reinforce and build community, social and intercultural cohesion. The goal is to achieve community cohesion, decrease social exclusion and prevent radicalization. For instance, regular dialogues have to be implemented with marginalized and disaffected groups particularly of young people and perform risk assessment of communities to identify groups threatened by radicalization.

4.2 Intelligence gathering

The Pajac village conducts monthly meetings with the sub-village and suburb leaders in which every sub-village has a Barangay (Village) Auxiliary Team (BAT) also a part of BADAC (Barangay Anti-Drug Abuse Council). During these monthly meetings, the village Chairman asks the leaders and the BAT if there are new residents within their respective areas of concern. They are also required to report new dwellers and personalities especially those who are violent and suspected as armed individuals. This is necessary for a wider vigilance and faster monitoring in the village.

This means that the village Chairman gives instructions to the Barangay (Village) Auxiliary Team or to be vigilant of new faces and suspicious personalities particularly to those who are carrying firearms. Like the Bohol incident where an extremist was easily apprehended due to the vigilant community. The only source of information from “sitios” or sub-village are the BAT and the appointed representatives during monthly meetings where they are tasked to report updates.

Gunaratna (2013) maintained that both the government and communities should work together to promote common ideology to build community resilience. Meanwhile, the BADAC has this Advocacy Information Campaign Committee which also serves as source of information to the village during monthly meetings with the presence of a police Officer where they can report some problems related to peace and order.

This is related to the concept of Wilson (2006) where he stated that the police and the community expect from each other concretely in realizing actively works which they altogether implement as partners. The Pajac village also established the “Donation Box” program with the

primary objective of gathering information from community members. Through this program, those people who hesitate to report threats and unusual personalities because of fear can now report anonymously thru written comments and suggestions dropped in the designated “Donation Box”.

Das (2016) pointed out that it is essential to build a collaborative relationship between the government and the local community rather than the government alone deciding and informing the community. Further, Hon. Ybañez shared incident at the height of the Marawi siege where there are stories that some extremists escaped and settled in the village, but when clarified, they were just students looking for jobs.

In terms of public awareness and vigilance, Pajac village strengthen the implementation of “Mamamayang Ayaw sa Anomaliya, Mamamayang Ayaw sa Illegal na Droga” (MASAMASID) program especially that there is already a memorandum from the DILG to include violent extremism in the said program. Currently, the MASAMASID program has three areas; demand reduction, supply reduction, and combatting violent extremism. This means that prevention from violent extremism have been added in MASAMASID program in the DILG. While it is true that the number of subdivisions and housing in Pajac village is increasing, Hon. Ybañez made sure to ask for a list of current and new household members from the home owners association to regularly monitor dwellers and occupants.

4.3 Police presence

In terms of Police presence, the police personnel from Station 2 in Lapulapu City conduct programs related to health and medical mission where they encourage the community to participate thereby strengthen police-community relation. Bayerl (2017) emphasized that the key factor for the successful implementation of the community policing program is a solid cooperation between police and local residents underpinning a social cohesion. The program needs to drive away the tension between police and the community and strengthen police services quality, visibility and effectiveness in dealing with community related problems imbued with accountability.

The Pajac Village also has a Committee on Operations which is a part of the BADAC program. The forenamed committee is composed of Lapulapu city police and village local police where they conduct roving and street monitoring. They implement village rules and ordinances to promote safety and security, at the same time, ensure that the LGU does not encroach the role of the police rather collaborate to attain local development. The LGU assists the police for an effective implementation and peaceful community.

Furthermore, Pajac village is planning to install CCTVs on strategic areas, this project is already in its finalization phase and is soon to be implemented. The village Chairman said: *“Actually this is our project being actualize now, we have installed CCTCs already in the village”*. This undertaking is an effective way of keeping an eye in public places to minimize crimes and facilitate investigation.

The local leaders affirmed that the community plays a very important role, that is why they plead to the residents to report any new and suspicious personalities. True enough, the community residents play a vital role in policing. Meanwhile, the Chairman of Peace and Order of the Sangguniang Pambarangay conducted intelligence monitoring on the population of Muslims in Pajac village. *“We have many Muslim brothers in our village, so we have intelligence gathering so as to know who are local residents of the village”*.

This confirms that the local government has a mechanism to identify new residents in the village. They also implemented the suburb system where they can gather information on the entrance and exit of Muslim residents and do background checks. *“We also implement in the sub-*

village a so called “Purok System” or suburb system for us to know who are actually residents especially from our Muslim brothers, to identify where they come from and who really are they.”

The Village local police conduct the intelligence gathering. Through roving and information gathering from the suburb and Muslim leaders. The U.S. Marine Corps (2002) stipulates the terrorist goals, intentions, and capabilities and an active intelligence program as some of the significant aspects that the government should have to counter violent acts of extremism.

The village local police conducts community roving from 11 in the evening to 2 o'clock in the morning. Sometimes they implement curfew and rescue minors in the streets. Other teenagers are apprehended and brought to the village hall for profiling. Due to the increasing crime rate particularly on “riding in tandem” incidence, the Sangguniang Pambarangay approved the resolution prohibiting the use of bonnets which cover the face of tricycle drivers.

The Committee’s operations involving legal rights in the village is also very active. With regards to the youth, the village has basketball league every Saturday, trainings for basic courses, and livelihood programs such as candle making. This is to keep the youth busy with sports and other fruitful activities, so they can feel a sense of belongingness and be pre-occupied keeping them away from extremist recruiters.

Along police presence implementation, the findings show that posting of police is moderately implemented (grand mean = 2.81, Table 2) indicating that stakeholders observed only occasional presence of the police presence in the village. Specifically, the creation of the Committee on Operation of BADAC (weighted mean = 3.09) was seen being moderately implemented. The Committee on Operation is responsible for monitoring the entire village to maintain peace and order, also conduct regular household visitations, roving and foot patrols within the village. This shows that the BADAC's Committee on Operation has been implemented in the village and is known to the public.

Table 2. Level of implementation of police presence

Indicator	Muslim Community	Non-Muslim Community	Village Officials	Mean	Description
There is the presence of Committee on Operation of BADAC composed of Police and village local police.	3.79	2.48	3.00	3.09	MI
The police conducts regular or random checkpoints.	3.47	2.76	2.29	2.84	MI
The police conducts area roving from 11 pm to dawn.	3.40	2.67	2.38	2.82	MI
The Station 2 police conducts medical missions and monthly feeding program.	3.43	2.24	2.75	2.81	MI
The police conducts foot patrol	3.50	2.29	2.38	2.72	MI
Grand Mean				2.81	MI

Ranges for the weighted mean

Description

1.00 – 1.89

Not Implemented (NI)

1.90 – 2.79

Less Implemented (LI)

2.80 – 3.39

Moderately Implemented (MI)

3.40 – 4.00

Highly Implemented (HI)

Moreover, checkpoints (weighted mean = 2.84) in the village are seen as moderately implemented. The non-Muslim respondents confirmed the implementation of checkpoints in every

street and road as a commendable initiative. These check points can protect the residents from anonymous and undocumented single motorcycle or “habal-habal” drivers. The conduct of regular checkpoints is vital to decrease the rate of crime involving drivers and riding-in-tandems, it is also done to monitor illegal activities by identify personalities with bad intentions. Checkpoints are effective ways to employ safer and peaceful environment. The conduct of foot patrol by police officers in tandem with village local police is seen to be moderately implemented (weighted mean = 2.72). This suggests that the implementation of foot patrols in the village is moderately felt and seen by the village residents. Though implemented by the local government, the activity is not frequently administered by the village. One of the reason is due to lack of village personnel for foot patrol. Indeed, one of the modern dilemmas in public administration is when population is increasing but resources are very limited. Even the PNP is beset with such perennial problem of police visibility.

On the other hand, medical missions and feeding programs by police personnel in station 2 were seen as implemented (weighted mean = 2.81). This suggests that programs have been conducted by police officers in Pajac village though not on a regular basis. These activities serve tools for the community to witness presence of the police whom they can build with for a harmonious community relationship.

Overall, the community-based policing practices in Pajac village to counter and prevent violent extremism are occasionally observed by the stakeholders. There have been community-based policing practices in Pajac village aimed at preventing and countering violent extremism for the protection of the citizens' welfare, these undertakings are felt by the community but there are still some who are not aware of such practices.

4.4 Intelligence hardening

Descriptive data analysis revealed that intelligence hardening (Table 3) is moderately implemented (weighted mean = 2.92). This suggests that stakeholders occasionally observed community policing practices in the village. It is even noted that village officials recognized absence or lack of implementation (less implemented) like the “Donation Box” program. Similar results of moderate implementation were obtained from Muslim and sub-village leaders.

The dissemination of hotline numbers to the community was seen also as moderately implemented (weighted mean = 3.25). Hotline numbers are very important so that community residents can easily report suspicious and illegal activities in the village. Any commotion can be solved and responded immediately by the police and village police through hotline number contacts. Hotline numbers also serve to gather information from the community with direct source of information from every sub-village and suburb. They serve as essential instruments for active and responsive village information mechanism. It was noted that community residents are duly informed on the hotline numbers for emergency texts and calls.

The Handbook on the PNP three-tiered defense system against terrorism highlighted that vigilance in united action is the first step to weaken the power of terrorism. Farther, the Village Intelligence Network (BIN) program of the Philippine National Police 7 through the village leaders are encouraged. There has to be harmonious and productive cooperation in the intelligence gathering among respective villages.

Meanwhile, the "Donation Box" program was seen as moderately implemented (weighted mean = 2.54) by the study respondents, the desire is to get high implementation feedback about the program. Evidently, this finding indicates that only a number of respondents know the existence of the "Donation Box" program. According to the village Chairman, the "Donation Box" program is created so that community members can report any suspicious action without

hesitations and fear thereby enable villagers to become vigilant and cooperative with the police force and the government in general.

Table 3. Level of implementation of intelligence hardening

Intelligence Hardening	Muslim Community	Non-Muslim Community	Village Officials	Mean	Description
The LGU/village implements dissemination of Hotline Numbers.	3.80	2.81	3.13	3.25	MI
The LGU/village implements monthly meetings with the BPOC together with the BADAC.	3.60	2.33	3.63	3.18	MI
Every sub-village has a village Auxiliary Team (BAT)	3.87	2.19	3.00	3.02	MI
The LGU/village implements Information Campaign Committee of Village Anti-Drug Abuse Council (BADAC)	3.60	2.24	3.38	2.99	MI
The LGU/village gathers data from the Muslim, suburb and other community leaders.	3.73	2.33	1.63	2.56	LI
Implementation of the “Donation Box” Program.	3.40	2.33	1.88	2.54	LI
Grand mean				2.92	MI

Ranges for the weighted mean

1.00 – 1.89

1.90 – 2.79

2.80 – 3.39

3.40 – 4.00

Description

Not Implemented (NI)

Less Implemented (LI)

Moderately Implemented (MI)

Highly Implemented (HI)

4.5 Stakeholders' participation

As the village Chairman of Pajac, Hon. Ybañez considers the BADAC Chairman and the Chairman on Women and Families the most significant stakeholders in the village. On information campaign, the students and the faith-based organization play very important role. He also taps the collaboration of the school Principals and the “Ugnayan ng Barangay at Simbahan” (UBAS), among others, regardless of religious affiliations in the collective efforts to counter violent extremism in the village.

Pajac Village has the “Kababayn-an sa Pajac” and the Development Cooperative where they spearhead livelihood programs such as soap and dishwashing liquid making to which the community members are encouraged to join and participate. These local level initiatives receive assistance from the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE). The DOLE required the village to support these programs by at least twenty percent (20 percent) of the capital since the remaining eighty percent (80 percent) will be provided by DOLE. Pajac Village also made sure that there are representatives from the Muslim community in the said livelihood programs.

According to Hon. Ybañez, the village has a good relationship with the police whom they can easily call for help whenever they have problems and unwanted commotions. He added that there is no problem with their stakeholders since they are very participative to the village's activities and programs. The village also administers joint meeting with the BPOC and BADAC together with selected teachers and principals from the four schools of Pajac, PTCA, Faith-based organizations, NGOs, POs, and the Kababayn-an sa Pajac. Muslims villagers are always encouraged to join the meetings and dialogues, in fact they are constantly invited but sometimes they cannot attend.

When asked on the importance of participation, Hon. Ybañez answered in this manner: *“For me, community participation is really important to get the information about the local residents since they expect during the meeting feedbacks on what they want the village to do and the police as peace keepers. For some of our health programs we conduct a monthly feeding so the police are present also there and participate in the activity. Feeding the children is not the only the purpose of the police but also surveillance to maintain peace and order in the community.”*

Amongst the stakeholders considered by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan are the BPATS and BAT (“Kasagaran ana mga BPATS og BAT nato, village auxiliary Team”) which are composed of community leaders. BPATS is employed to monitor every streets and areas. They will also coordinate to the committee on peace and order. Community leaders play a crucial and vital role since they are the ones who are close to the people. The community and several stakeholders are participative to the undertakings of the Sangguniang Panbarangay. Citizens’ cooperation can reduce crimes and unite community to prevent violent acts.

It was indicated in the UN Action Plan (ND) that there are needs for multidisciplinary approach in crafting national and local plans. This may involve combating and preventing violent extremism with feedback from different policy entities such as law enforcement, social care agencies, education, youth and religious groups. The Plan should also consider inputs from non-governmental groups, the civil society groups, the media as well as from private sector representatives.

It is evident that there is multi sectoral participation of stakeholders in Pajac village towards village development and promotion of good governance. However, it would have been best for the local government to craft PPAs (projects, programs and activities) that is more focused on how to prevent and counter violent terrorism by empowering the community.

4.6 Encountered problems and challenges

The stakeholders did not encounter serious problems in the village. The village officials that existing problems are not critical given the that the village has not yet experienced any incidence of major violent extremism which could cause harm to the community. So far, only 1 incident of an identified Australian Muslim terrorist was apprehended in 2014. The residents felt that the extent of such problem has been lighter compared to the problem of drugs, riding in tandem, shoot outs and robbery among other occurrence of crimes in the village. It became obvious that the local residents lack awareness on the existence of these community based policing practices. Others admitted they have not seen such village initiatives.

However, when surveyed, the respondents pointed out impatient and undisciplined tricycle drivers (weighted mean = 2.73) although not at the less serious level. In an interview, the village Chairperson on the Committee of Peace and Order described that there are many tricycle drivers, most of whom are Muslim migrants, often do not follow rules in the village such as parking, loading and unloading. Some migrants do not respect the law nor the village authority. Possible reasons could be lack of knowledge on basic traffic rules. Even with mandates and laws, if the philosophy and culture of the residents are not to abide on these rules, then they make very little difference.

The challenge in dealing with these tricycle drivers is that Muslims are stereotyped as hard headed and violent. These negative image may cause fear in the community. Some traffic officials are lenient when it comes to Muslim violators for fear of being shoot by the next day. Some officials admitted that they are hesitant to approach or talk to them. The Muslim culture of “Rido”, adds up to the negative image of Muslim aside from being labeled as “terrorists”. It is known that if a person has a spat with one Muslim, the whole family or the Muslim community will be against

that person. The traditional practice of “an eye for an eye” manifests strong family ties and love among the Muslim community. It is said that if anyone kills one Muslim in the family, the Muslim family will also kill that person’s clan until no one is left.

Culture is another barrier in implementing CBPP at the village level. This can be ascribed to the fact that culture plays a very crucial yet significant role in achieving peace and development efforts. This should be given consideration since individuals are bound to abide one’s culture which dictates ones’ action and becoming. Residents of Pajac Village tend to see culture as integral part of life that the village people should delve into, one way of doing this is educating the people on the culture of the Muslims. Indeed, culture (in aspect language and religion) can be one of the challenges in carrying out good governance.

Table 4. Encountered challenges and problems

Challenges and Problems	Muslim Community	Non-Muslim Community	Village Officials	Mean	Interpretation
Impatient & undisciplined tricycle drivers	1.47	2.86	3.86	2.73	Less Serious
Cultural barrier	1.60	2.71	3.75	2.69	Less Serious
Language barrier	1.40	2.81	3.75	2.65	Less Serious
Lack of funds	1.36	2.45	3.86	2.56	Less Serious
Lack of education	2.20	2.22	3.14	2.52	Less Serious
Limited public educational system	1.57	2.62	3.38	2.52	Less Serious
Lack of political will	1.57	2.86	3.13	2.52	Less Serious
Lack of support	1.20	2.86	3.38	2.48	Less Serious
Lack of priority/focus	1.40	2.95	3.00	2.45	Less Serious
Uncooperative leaders	1.40	2.67	3.25	2.44	Less Serious
Insufficient police/village police	1.40	2.76	3.13	2.43	Less Serious
Unregistered/Unrecorded citizens	1.73	2.86	3.63	2.41	Less Serious
Lack of activities/programs	1.33	2.43	2.63	2.13	Less Serious
Grand Mean				2.50	Less serious

Ranges for the weighted mean	Description
1.00 – 1.89	Not Serious
1.90 – 2.79	Less Serious
2.80 – 3.39	Moderately Serious
3.40 – 4.00	Highly Serious

The village’s lack of activities in countering and preventing violent extremism exhibited a less serious (2.13) result as manifested from survey responses. This may indicate that the village somehow initiated activities to prevent and counter violent extremism which the citizens can participate and take part. Activities are very essential especially that they uphold amity to show to residents that their involvement in village collective works is given due importance. It is one way of achieving effectiveness and productivity and proper usage of public funds. When interviewed, the local chief executive enumerated the following activities: monthly meeting with the suburb and other community leaders, regular dialogue with the Muslim and non-Muslim residents, summer leagues, joint meeting with the BPOC and BADAC, conduct of checkpoints and roving, among others.

Overall, the encountered problems and challenges encountered in Pajac Village are less serious as confirmed by the respondents. The village officials and personnel in conjunction with

other committees and stakeholder have done actions to solve the most felt problem in the community. They village local government has the initiative to comply with the national (DILG, PNP) mandates in of maintaining security and safety of the community at the same time promoting good governance. Table 4 presents the results of the survey of the stakeholders as to their encountered problems and challenges.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

The increasing number of undocumented Muslims migrants through the years in Pajac village, Lapulapu City, Philippines has posed the community at risk for violent extremist groups. Increased number of subdivisions and housing areas also magnified the effect of high social mobility which increased the demand for village safety and security. The Lapulapu City implemented initiatives in countering and preventing violent extremism, but less felt by the stakeholders both by Christians and Muslim residents. Preemptive initiatives are limited to meetings and dialogues with the people's organizations and other informal leaders. Stakeholders' participations are also limited without concrete collaborative meetings with the said groups. The village local government has been compliant to the national mandate of implementing the "Purok System" (suburb system) which proved beneficial in preventing violent extremisms.

Preemptive activities are strategically conducted in the village, yet not responsive to address the risk or presence of violent extremists. The local government lacks focus in addressing the threat of terrorism in the community as programs, plans and initiatives are mostly focused on drug prevention and "Oplan Tokhang" (war on drugs) activities. It is recommended that more collaborative participations across all stakeholders to address safety and security threats in the area can be strengthened to ensure a more responsive community-based preemptive plan to counter extremism.

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