

Extent of Implementation of Strategies and Programs Against Riding in Tandem Criminals

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Abstract - *This paper investigated the extent of implementation of strategies and programs against riding in tandem criminals by the Batangas PNP. Motorcycle back-riders, most commonly known as riding-in-tandem criminals, have an ample opportunity to commit heinous crimes with impunity because of the facility of getting away from the crime scene with the use of a motorcycle that can weave through even heavy traffic. The researchers used the descriptive research in gathering data with the adapted questionnaire and informal interview from 16 law enforcers. The researchers found out that shooting incident was the most prevalent case in Batangas City and majority of programs implemented in the city was conducting checkpoints and on-the-spot weapon check to combat these pillion riders.*

Keywords: *Riding in Tandem, criminals, Strategies and Programs*

INTRODUCTION

Riding in tandem according to Merriam-Webster dictionary is a group of two or more persons arranged one behind the other or two individuals acting in conjunction. Because this term “riding in tandem” was newly introduced in the Philippines we are lacking of resources to define this term but in accordance to our study it means an act of riding of two individuals on a motorcycle or scooter. Actually it was one of the nominated word as “word of the year” in a blog on a social networking site in coordination with the Filipinas Institute of Translation.

Motorcycle ownership has exploded in recent years, passing the 4 million mark (including tricycles) in 2012, according to registration statistics compiled by the Land Transportation

Office. But the real news is in the registration levels for new motorcycles, over 1 million a year in the three years to 2013. An astonishing one-fourth of registered motorcycles are new, even as the overall motorcycle population remains stable. It can interpret the motorcycle registration statistics like -- motorcycles destroyed in accidents, lost by their original owners to theft, rendered useless by mechanical breakdown, or simply kept unregistered beyond the first year. Whatever the case, two things are undeniable -- first, there is at any given time a significant population of unregistered motorcycles floating about; and second, people keep buying and registering motorcycles in large numbers every year (Medina, 2014).

Potential victims are all over the place, while congested roads make pursuit difficult and escape more likely. The signature motorcycle crime of assassination-in-traffic seems tailor-made for a place like Manila, where even the big shots - at least the ones who can't afford helicopters or bulletproof cars -- have to travel predictable routes and spend long amounts of time standing still at crowded intersections (Medina, 2014).

Establishing the factors present there is no doubt that crimes committed by motorcycle criminals are possible. According to an article on the Philippine Daily Inquirer, tandem riders have become more daring there are snatchers, burglars, assassins or even rapists.

Pedroche (2014) appreciated the need for some families to save on their commute by riding tandem. However, economy should give way to public safety and dear life. Couples should understand that while they do save on money, some other lives are being lost to tandem-riders.

On the other hand, according to an article on Manila Bulletin DILG Secretary Mar Roxas said that motorcycle crimes are really now alarming. They have monitored gradual increase in cases of crimes perpetrated by motorcycle-riding suspects.

Authorities said that suspects would use motorcycles because they are the most convenient way of escaping. In addressing the problem, DILG Secretary Mar Roxas said that authorities should focus on preventive measures and the assurance that all the victims are assured that justice will be given to them (Recuenco, 2014)

In line with this, PNP Chief Superintendent Theodore Sindac admitted that they have to go beyond mere police visibility and implement police presence. They are not organized criminal groups but they can manage to execute the crime fast and escape quickly. They also need the Land Transportation Office to deputize PNP members for them to be able to implement Republic Act 4136 or the Land Transportation and Traffic Code. Their present challenge now is that the Highway Patrol Group and traffic enforcement units are currently facing crimes involving vehicles with no plate numbers. The most recent crimes which have plagued the city (“PNP Asks LTO”, 2014).

Motorcycle riders also proposed anti-crime proposals to address this so called pillion riders by means of banning passengers, requiring riders to wear vests printed with their motorcycle's license numbers, wear white helmets and have their helmets registered with the barangay government and imposition of 30 km speed limit. (“Riding in Tandem”, 2014)

Batangas City was not an exemption to these crime problem. That is why we, the researchers were very eager in pursuing our study. Shooting incidents involving motorcycle criminals in different barangays in Batangas City were really alarming. Law enforcers conduct stricter checkpoints and on the spot weapon check to deter this would be criminals. They also increase their police visibility and continuous application of QUAD+1 concept of police operations.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to determine the implementation of strategies and programs against riding in tandem by the Batangas PNP. More specifically, it aimed to determine the prevalence of cases involving riding in tandem criminals in Batangas City for the year 2012-2014; to determine the level of implementation of strategies and programs in controlling crimes committed by riding in tandem suspects and to propose plan of action to improve the implementation of programs and strategies against riding in tandem.

METHODS

Research Design

The research design utilized the descriptive survey method of research to identify the plans and programs implemented throughout the city and to determine the extent of implementation of Batangas City PNP against crimes committed by riding in tandem. The descriptive is a fact finding method with adequate interpretation dealing with questions based on the present and current phenomenon (Calderon, . In addition, a retrospective approach was also used since some existing data were also included in the process of the study.

Participants of the Study

The set of respondents of this research were taken from sixteen (16) law enforcers from investigation section who has close contact with this kind of cases and ninety (90) barangay tanods from top five barangays with the highest crime rate based on statistics and records obtained from the Batangas Police Station who are responsible for the suppression of crimes committed by riding in tandem.

Instrument

The researchers used structured questionnaire and verbal interviews to gather data and information from the respondents. The respondents asked to complete the questionnaire, respond honestly. They were given the assurance that their identities will be kept confidential. The instrument is composed of twenty questions. It is designed to identify the extent of implementation of strategies and programs against riding in tandem criminals by the Batangas PNP. It was content-validated by experts and tested its internal consistency with computed Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.823 which is considered good to be used for the study.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers presented a set of questionnaire to their research adviser for approval. They conducted interview from the barangay tanods of some barangays in Batangas City and from the law enforcers and sent a letter to the Chief of Police of Batangas City, requesting to give them record of incidents of crime involving riding in tandem criminals. They also sought for copies

of plans and programs implemented by Batangas City PNP in combatting and dealing with these incidents.

After conducting an informal interview, the researchers then distributed the questionnaire individually to each respondent and they requested each respondent to take extra time and effort to answer the questionnaire completely. They were given instruction on how to answer the questionnaire properly. After ample time was given, questionnaire was retrieved for tallying, interpreting and evaluating. The respondents were informed regarding the purpose of this study. Strict confidentiality of their identity as respondents was observed. They were assured that the information they provided in the study will be used solely for the purpose of this research.

Data Analysis

The data on the questionnaire with regards to the profile of the respondents utilized the frequency and percentage distribution of the responses. Data gathered from the questionnaire were tallied, computed, discussed and tabulated to attain significant findings. The statistics were used in determining the profile of the respondents, the extent of effectiveness of the programs against riding in tandem in order to serve and protect the community. The statistical tool used was the percentage and ranking method. The statistical treatment of data called for simple computation of the percentage ranking system to comply with the requirements of the descriptive approach as the method used. Percentage is the rate of frequency over the total number of responses in every hundred.

The given scale was used to interpret the result of the data gathered from the survey: 3.50 – 4.00 = Full Extent; 2.50 – 3.49 = Moderate Extent; 1.50 – 2.49 = Least Extent; 1.00 – 1.49 = Not at All.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As shown in Figure 1, shooting incident ranked first with a total of fourteen (14) incidents followed by robbery with violence with a total of six (6) incidents while other incidents involving theft, robbery hold up has only a total of one (1) crime incident throughout the year.

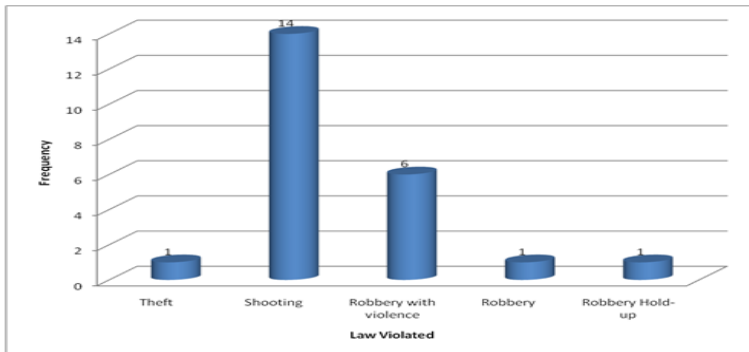


Figure 1. Prevalence of Cases Involving Riding in Tandem Criminals for 2012

The cause of the alarming rise of shooting incidents in the area was because they were mostly involved with robbery. Criminals intend to use guns to threaten and in most cases to injure the victim so he can easily get the victim's property or any valuable things.

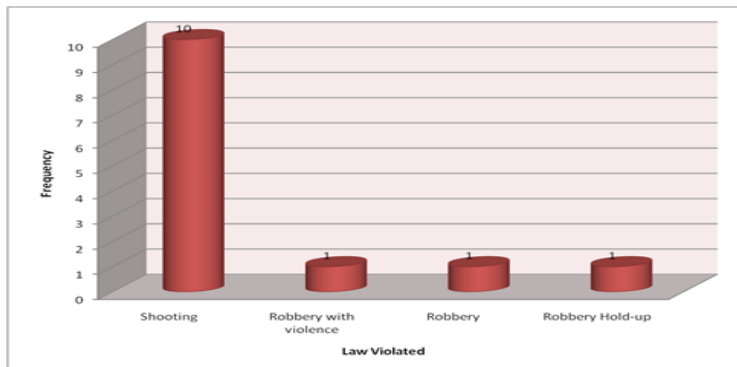


Figure 2. Prevalence of Cases Involving Riding in Tandem Criminals for 2013

As shown in Figure 2, shooting incident ranked first with a total number of ten (10) incidents followed with robbery with violence, robbery and robbery hold up has only a total of one (1) crime incident throughout the year. Due to the 2013 Elections crimes of shooting incidents were very prevalent. Poling (2013) cited that the Philippines recent political history has been one of

clan violence, endemic corruption, and deep political rivalries that have led to turbulent and bloody elections. Politicians are known to hire private militias to threaten their rivals and intimidate voters.

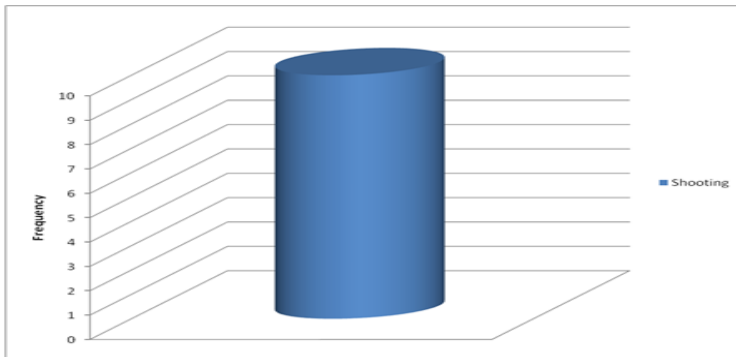


Figure 3. Prevalence of Cases Involving Riding in Tandem Criminals for 2014

In Figure 3, shooting incident was the only crime incident involving motorcycle criminals with a total number of six (6) incidents for these year.

Based from the result of Table 1, the over-all assessment of the respondents on the extent of implementation of strategies and programs against riding in tandem criminals by the Batangas PNP was moderate extent with an over-all composite mean of 2.72. Among the items enumerated, conducting PNP checkpoints and on the spot weapon check ranked first with a mean score of 3.88 and verbally interpreted as full extent. In order to suppress these pillion riders police action involves reinforced police mobile and visibility patrol complemented by vigorous checkpoint operations and on-the-spot weapons check operations on riding in tandem motorists and also on board public conveyances,” PNP spokesman Chief Supt. Agrimero Cruz said. (The Freeman, 2012). It was followed by optimizing police personnel in streets, mall, banks, transport terminals etc., Community Crime Watch Program, No Plate No Travel Policy and Patrolling System of Highway Patrol Group with 3.85, 3.78 and 3.563 respectively.

Table 1. Level of implementation of strategies and programs in controlling crimes committed by riding in tandem suspects

	Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1.	Wearing of vest printed with their motorcycle's license numbers.	1.46	Not at All	18
2.	Wearing white helmets Registered with their barangay government	1.31	Not at All	20
3.	Riding in tandem ban	1.34	Not at All	19
4.	Imposition of 30 km speed limit.	2.38	Least Extent	14
5.	Optimizing police personnel in streets, mall, banks, transport terminals etc.	3.85	Full Extent	2.5
6.	Community Crime Watch Program.	3.85	Full Extent	2.5
7.	Adopting strategic Policy against Riding in tandem.	2.72	Moderate Extent	11
8.	Implementation of Police Integrated Patrol System	3.23	Moderate Extent	8
9.	Training of policemen on how to ride motorcycles	1.87	Least Extent	15
10.	City/Barangay Ordinances against Riding in Tandem	1.47	Not at All	17
11.	LTO's cooperation in conducting checkpoints	2.63	Moderate Extent	12
12.	Patrolling System of Highway Patrol Group	3.63	Full Extent	5
13.	Implementing stop and Frisk operation	3.60	Full Extent	6
14.	Establishment of CCTV Cameras on public areas	3.22	Moderate Extent	9
15.	Conducting PNP checkpoints and on the spot weapon check	3.88	Full Extent	1
16.	Increasing the visibility of police officers in crowded areas.	3.35	Moderate Extent	7
17.	Seminars about the Modus Operandi of Riding in Tandem Criminals	1.58	Least Extent	16
18.	Motorized anti-street crime Operatives	2.87	Moderate Extent	10
19.	No Plate No travel Policy	3.78	Full Extent	4
20.	Continuous application of "QUAD+1" concept of police Operations	2.42	Least Extent	13
	Composite Mean	2.72	Moderate Extent	

In accordance to this Motorcycle Rights Organization proposed a Community Crime Watch Program to help law enforcers deter would be criminals, an information gateway shall be setup so that would be criminals don't just watch out for police, they watch out for everybody who may be part of the program. And with the support of the Highway Patrol Group with their new strategy, conducting weekly visitorial inspections on establishments engaged in "buy-and-sell" of motor vehicles, motorcycles and vehicular parts.

There were programs that were assessed as to moderate extent and increasing the visibility of police officers in crowded areas (3.35), implementation of Police Integrated Patrol System (3.23) and establishment of CCTV Cameras on public areas (3.22) topped on the list. The more cops and patrol cars that criminals will see, the more they'll think twice before committing a crime. Improve the mobility of the police force. If quick-responding policemen and sharpshooters are on faster cars and motorcycles, and are as mobile as the criminals, crimes can be solved expeditiously or even prevented. Another is the use of our new technologies like the CCTV cameras, a CCTV system is not a physical barrier. It does not limit access to certain areas, make an object harder to steal, or a person more difficult to assault and rob. This does not mean it is not an example of situational crime prevention. It is highly situational, and as will be shown, does have some crime prevention capacity in the right situations. (Ratcliffe, 2011).

In addition, continuous application of "QUAD+1" concept of police Operations, imposition of 30 km speed limit, training of policemen on how to ride motorcycles and seminars about the Modus Operandi of Riding in Tandem Criminals were reviewed to a least extent only. To increase the effectiveness of the patrol system the concept "QUAD+1" was adopted this means for every four patrol officers another one patrol officer was added. In connection to this law enforcer has started to implement speed limits to suppress these riding in tandem criminals.

On the other hand, there were still programs/strategies that from the point of view of the respondents were not really implemented such as City/Barangay Ordinances against Riding in Tandem, wearing of vest printed with their motorcycle's license numbers, riding in tandem ban and wearing white helmets Registered with their barangay government with 1.47, 1.46, 1.34 and 1.31 respectively. In accordance to this Manila Mayor Joseph Ejercito Estrada is considering a ban on "riding in tandem", or riding pillion, to curb crime committed by crooks on motorbikes. These supports wearing white helmets and vest printed with their motorcycles license numbers but Motorcycle Rights Organization protested because they said these program will limit their rights.

Proposed Plan of Actions to Lessen Crimes Committed by Riding in Tandem Criminals

1. Wearing of vest printed with their motorcycle's license numbers
2. Wearing white helmets registered with their barangay government
3. Riding in Tandem Ban
4. Training of Policemen on how to ride motorcycles
5. Establishment of CCTV cameras on public areas
6. Seminars about the modus operandi of riding in tandem criminals
7. City/Barangay ordinances against riding in tandem
8. Increasing the visibility of police officers in public areas
9. Motorized anti street crime operatives
10. Implementing of Police Integrated Patrol System

CONCLUSIONS

In terms of prevalence of cases shooting incident was the most prevalent. In terms of extent of implementation of strategies and programs by the Batangas PNP, conducting PNP checkpoints and on the spot weapon check ranked first and interpreted as full extent while there are other programs and strategies that are not still implemented such as City/Barangay Ordinances against riding in Tandem, wearing of vest printed with their motorcycle's license numbers, riding in tandem ban and wearing white helmets registered with their barangay government.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Batangas City PNP should intensify police visibility as this is a good deterrent to would be criminals. Massive control of possession of firearms should be consistently implemented to lessen one of the elements of crime which is instrumentality.

The PNP should review their plans and strategies to evaluate its effectiveness and do the needed improvement to cope with the increasing number of crime incidents involving riding in tandem criminals.

A proposed plan of action may be implemented and evaluated its effectiveness.

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