

**MOTIVATION IN POLICING SUPPORT UNITS: A REVIEW OF DETERMINANTS
INFLUENCING POLICE AUXILIARY ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION****Mae Jean M. Achacoso**mjmachacoso02202400397@usep.edu.ph

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ABSTRACT

Police auxiliaries, barangay tanods, and community safety volunteers play a vital role in supporting formal law enforcement, particularly in community-based policing and public safety. However, these policing support units often operate under conditions of limited compensation, role ambiguity, and occupational risk, raising concerns about motivation and retention. This study systematically synthesized empirical evidence on the motivational determinants influencing police auxiliary engagement and retention. Guided by the PRISMA 2020 framework, a systematic literature review was conducted on studies published between 2015 and 2025, using Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and ScienceDirect, which yielded twelve (12) eligible studies. Thematic analysis revealed that motivation is shaped by both intrinsic factors, such as public service commitment, altruism, and civic duty, and extrinsic factors, including community recognition, organizational and leadership support, training opportunities, incentives, and job satisfaction. Resilience and adaptive coping mechanisms also played a key role in sustaining engagement. The findings underscore the need for strengthened institutional support, standardized training, and consistent incentive systems to enhance performance and retention among police auxiliaries.

Keywords:

Police auxiliaries; Barangay tanods, Community-based policing, Motivation, Engagement and retention, Public service motivation, Policing support units

INTRODUCTION

Motivation is a critical determinant of performance, engagement, and retention in public-sector organizations, particularly in law enforcement contexts where work demands are complex, high-risk, and publicly scrutinized. Motivation influences not only how individuals perform assigned tasks but also their persistence, ethical conduct, and commitment to public service goals. Empirical evidence indicates that both intrinsic factors (such as civic duty and altruism) and extrinsic factors (including incentives, recognition, and organizational support) significantly shape employee engagement and effectiveness in government institutions (Engidaw, 2021). In policing support units, where roles are often voluntary or semi-formal, motivation becomes especially crucial in sustaining service continuity and ensuring effective community-oriented policing outcomes.

Within policing systems, auxiliary and volunteer support units play a vital yet often underexamined role. In the Philippines, police auxiliaries, barangay tanods, and community safety volunteers complement the Philippine National Police (PNP) by assisting in traffic management, crowd control, administrative support, and community-based safety initiatives. These support units help address manpower shortages and enhance police visibility at the community level, particularly in highly urbanized areas such as Davao City. International and local studies emphasize that auxiliaries contribute substantially to social stability and operational efficiency despite limited job security, benefits, and formal authority (Da-yi, 2020). However, the informal and non-permanent nature of auxiliary roles often exposes them to inconsistent support, unclear role expectations, and heightened occupational risks. These conditions may adversely affect motivation, job satisfaction, and long-term commitment if not adequately addressed by institutional mechanisms. Consequently, understanding the

motivational determinants that sustain auxiliary engagement is essential for strengthening community-based policing and ensuring the continuity of public safety services.

Despite their importance, police auxiliaries frequently operate under conditions characterized by role ambiguity, minimal compensation, and occupational risks, raising concerns about sustained motivation, performance, and retention. While individual studies have explored aspects of auxiliary policing, a consolidated synthesis of motivational determinants remains limited. Addressing this gap, the present study conducts a PRISMA-guided systematic literature review to examine the motivational factors influencing engagement and retention in policing support units. Specifically, this review is guided by the following research questions: (RQ1) What are the characteristics of existing studies on police auxiliary motivation in terms of data sources, research design, and data types? (RQ2) What intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors influence police auxiliary engagement and performance? and (RQ3) What determinants affect the retention and sustained participation of police auxiliaries in community-based policing roles? By synthesizing evidence from 2015–2025, this study aims to inform policy, organizational practice, and future research on strengthening policing support systems.

OBJECTIVES

Through a systematic literature review, this study aims to synthesize empirical evidence on the motivational factors influencing the engagement, performance, and retention of police auxiliaries, barangay tanods, and other policing support units. More specifically, the study intends to: (a) determine the data sources, research designs, and data types utilized in previous studies on police auxiliary motivation; (b) examine the intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors that influence engagement and performance in policing support roles; and (c) identify the determinants affecting retention and sustained participation of police auxiliaries in community-based policing across the reviewed literature.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design. A systematic literature review was conducted to examine the motivational factors influencing the performance of police auxiliaries. This review adhered to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 guidelines to ensure methodological rigor and transparency. Prisma 2020 was designed to help systematic reviewers transparently report why the review was done, what the authors did, and what they found (Page et al., 2021). Through this framework, the review ensured a clear, replicable process that strengthened the credibility and reliability of the synthesized evidence.

Eligibility Criteria. For this systematic review, studies were considered eligible if they presented empirical or conceptual evidence directly related to police auxiliaries, barangay tanods, community safety volunteers, or other comparable community-based policing personnel. Only research examining motivational factors, job satisfaction, performance indicators, organizational influences, or workplace conditions relevant to auxiliary policing roles was included. To ensure the inclusion of recent and contextually relevant literature, only studies published between 2015 and 2025 were considered. Furthermore, the review included only full-text, open-access materials published in peer-reviewed journals or credible academic repositories to ensure methodological rigor and accessibility. Studies were excluded if they were not written in English, lacked empirical grounding, or consisted of opinion pieces, commentaries, or other non-scholarly content. Additionally, materials focusing exclusively on regular police officers without addressing auxiliary or volunteer roles, or those inaccessible due to paywalls or incomplete availability, were excluded.

Information Sources. The researcher employed various strategies to identify as many relevant studies as possible from online databases and search engines. Before conducting the search, it was ensured that no existing systematic reviews had been conducted on the same topic or objectives of this study. To date, no prior systematic literature reviews addressing these specific research objectives were found. The researcher then conducted an organized, systematic, and comprehensive search using three online databases: ScienceDirect, Research Gate and Google Scholar. These databases were selected because they provide access to peer-reviewed research and established scholarly publications. Each database has unique search features, therefore, different search strings and strategies were applied for each source. To do it, search was recorded following the details: source category, source name, search method, and date of search for each database. This was presented in Table 1 below.

Source Category	Source Name	Search Method	Date of Search
Online Database	Science Direct	Full Text, Abstract, Title, and keywords	2025-11-26
Online Repository	Research Gate	Full Text, Abstract, Title, and keywords	2025-11-29
Search Engine	Google Scholar	Full Text, Abstract, Title, and keywords	2025-12-06

Table 1. Search space for selected databases

Search Strategy. The search process served as a critical component of this review, and the researcher carefully refined and optimized the keywords used across the selected academic databases. As the study focuses on motivation within policing support units, it was necessary to identify the most relevant concepts and terminologies associated with community-based policing personnel. To capture studies aligned with the objectives, defined keywords and combinations such as “police auxiliaries,” “barangay tanods,” “community safety volunteers,” “auxiliary police motivation,” “job satisfaction of barangay tanods,” “performance of community safety volunteers,” and “organizational factors in auxiliary policing” were tested. Double quotation marks, Boolean operators, and proximity operators were applied to refine the search results—for example, searches such as “barangay tanod” AND “performance evaluation,” “police auxiliary” NEAR/5 “motivation,” and “community safety volunteers” OR “auxiliary police.” These systematic strategies enabled the retrieval of a broad yet relevant body of literature consistent with the aims of the review.

Study Selection. A structured and systematic approach to study selection was applied to ensure the inclusion of only the most relevant and high-quality articles in this review. Table 2 outlines the key stages of the selection procedure, whereas the PRISMA flow diagram provides a visual representation of the entire screening process.

Stage	Description
S1	Identification of motivational factors influencing Police Auxiliaries
S2	Selection of studies identified through different information sources
S3	Exclusion of Studies based on duplicates
S4	Exclusion of studies based on a ‘title, abstract and keywords’ screening against the eligibility criteria.
S5	Exclusion of Studies based on a ‘full text screening’.

Table 2. Stages of the study selection process

Figure 1 below presents the study selection process, which commenced with the Identification phase, where all studies potentially relevant to motivational factors and performance among police auxiliaries, barangay tanods, and community safety volunteers were gathered from Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and ScienceDirect. Through the use of structured search strings and Boolean operators, a total of 312 records were collected from these databases. After carefully removing 45 duplicate entries, 257 distinct studies remained for the Screening stage. During screening, the titles and abstracts of each article were reviewed to assess their relevance to the research focus on police auxiliary roles and key variables such as motivation, performance, job satisfaction, and organizational influences. From this process, 223 studies were excluded because they addressed unrelated topics, focused solely on regular police officers without auxiliary relevance, or did not center on motivation and performance constructs. The remaining 44 full-text articles underwent a detailed Eligibility assessment, where methodological quality, contextual fit, and empirical contribution were examined. At this point, 32 studies were excluded for reasons such as lacking empirical data, being commentary-only, not explicitly measuring motivation or performance, or having inaccessible full texts. Ultimately, 12 studies met all eligibility requirements and were selected for inclusion in the final synthesis, forming a solid evidence base for analyzing the motivational factors that influence the performance of police auxiliaries in the Philippine setting.

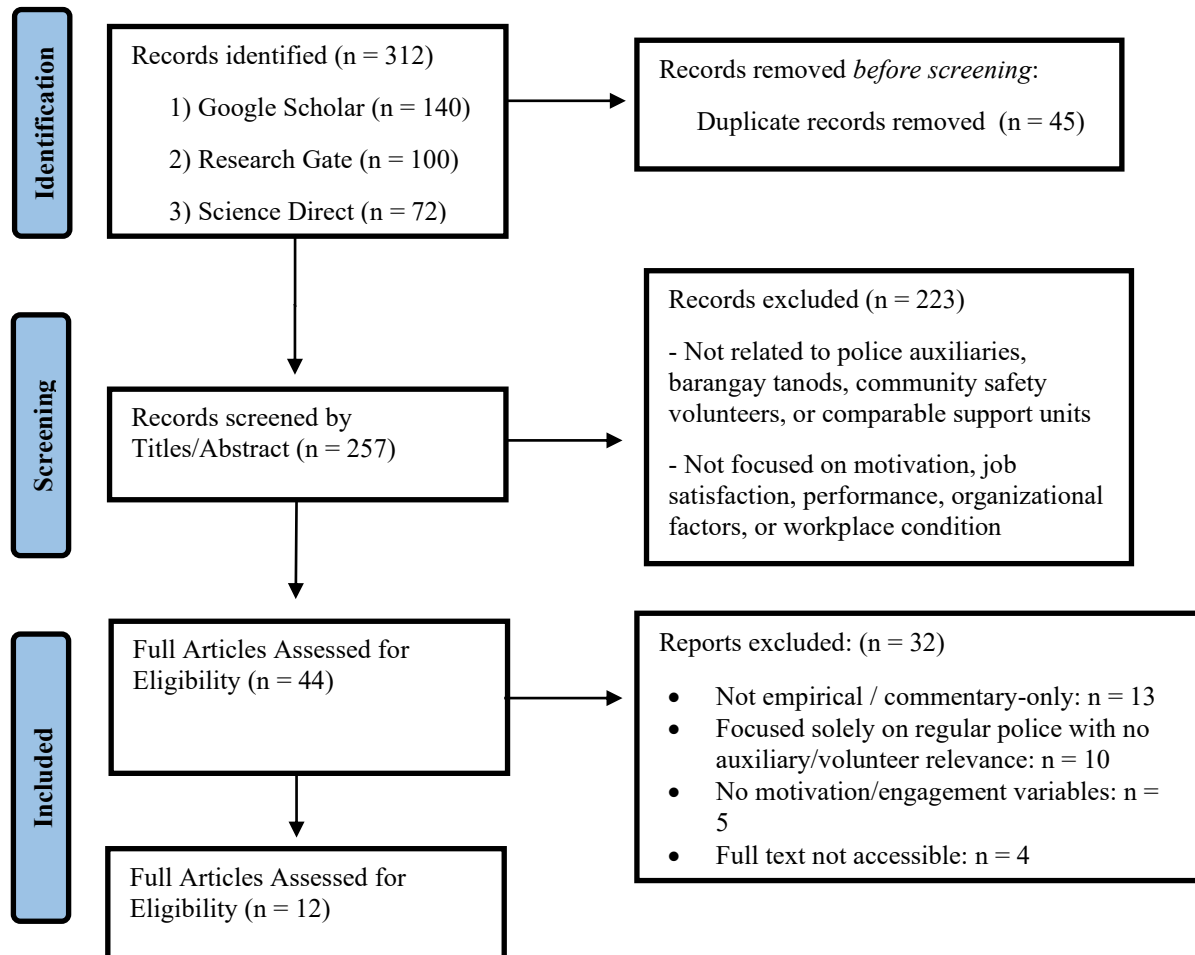


Figure 1. Study Selection Process Flow Diagram

Table 3 presents the distribution of the selected articles in various databases and search engines before and after the rigorous selection process. From the initial 312 articles, the number was reduced to 12. The final 12 articles will be subjected for data extraction and syntheses.

Source	Before	After
Google Scholar	140	6
Research Gate	100	4
ScienceDirect	72	2
Total	312	12

Table 3. Distribution of Articles Before and After the selection process

Data extraction and Synthesis. Data extraction and synthesis were carried out through a systematic review of the twelve (12) studies included in the final analysis. Microsoft Excel was used to consistently record essential information, including the title, author(s), year of publication, country, research design, participants, brief study description, identified motivational factors, and key findings related to police auxiliary motivation, engagement, and performance. Following extraction, a thematic synthesis was conducted to integrate findings across studies by identifying recurring patterns and conceptual similarities. This process resulted in the generation of key themes, namely intrinsic motivation and public service commitment; community trust, recognition, and social

value; organizational and leadership support; training and competency development; incentives, compensation, and job satisfaction; and resilience amid operational challenges and occupational risks. This approach ensured a structured and comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing police auxiliary motivation and effectiveness across diverse contexts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and interprets the findings derived from the twelve (12) studies included in the systematic literature review. The discussion focuses on the characteristics of the reviewed studies and the major motivational determinants influencing police auxiliary engagement, performance, and retention. Through thematic synthesis, several recurring factors emerged, highlighting both individual and organizational dimensions of motivation within policing support units.

Data Sources, Research Design, and Data Types. As shown in Table 4, half of the reviewed articles (50%) were sourced from Google Scholar, followed by ResearchGate (33.3%) and ScienceDirect (16.7%). Article identification and selection were conducted in accordance with the PRISMA guidelines.

Distribution of Articles	<i>n</i>	%
Based on Sources		
Science Direct	2	16.7
Research Gate	4	33.3
Google Scholar	6	50
Based on Research Design		
Quantitative	8	66.7
Qualitative	2	16.7
Mixed Method	2	16.7
Based on the Type of Data		
Primary	12	100
Secondary	0	0

Table 4. Distribution of Articles Based on Sources, Research Design, and Type of Data

In terms of research design, quantitative studies constituted the majority (66.7%), while qualitative and mixed-methods approaches each accounted for 16.7% of the total. All reviewed studies (100%) utilized primary data sources, including surveys, interviews, and case studies.

Intrinsic Motivation and Public Service Commitment. Across the included studies, intrinsic motivation and a strong commitment to public service emerged as foundational drivers of engagement among barangay tanods, police auxiliaries, and community safety volunteers. Participants consistently described their involvement as rooted in personal values such as civic duty, compassion, moral responsibility, and a genuine desire to contribute to public safety, rather than external rewards or material benefits. This highlights that a deeply held commitment to serving the community and internalized motivation are key factors sustaining engagement and participation in these frontline community roles. For instance, (Asis, 2020) found barangay tanods' effective performance stemmed from a deep commitment to community service and duty, while (Mendoza et al., 2024) highlighted public service motivation sustaining frontline auxiliaries amid risks. (Cruz et al., 2021) further evidenced altruism and responsibility as key, with community recognition reinforcing these intrinsic drivers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The concept of public service motivation (PSM)—defined as an individual's predisposition to serve the public interest and the common good—helps explain why individuals persist in community safety roles despite limited extrinsic incentives, with PSM strongly linked to prosocial behavior and sustained engagement in volunteer contexts (Megan Paul, PhD, 2021). Thus, intrinsic motivation grounded in public service commitment functions not only as an initial driver of participation but also as a sustaining force that enables barangay tanods and police auxiliaries to remain engaged, resilient, and effective in fulfilling their community safety roles despite resource constraints and occupational risks.

Community Trust, Recognition, and Social Value. Community trust, recognition, and social value strongly influenced the motivation and performance of police auxiliaries and barangay tanods. Participants consistently

reported higher morale when they felt respected and trusted by residents, with positive interactions reinforcing their identity as legitimate peacekeepers and encouraging continued service. Recognition from the community, whether through verbal appreciation, social respect, or visible support, strengthened their motivation and commitment, whereas a lack of appreciation or negative perceptions tended to weaken engagement. These dynamics align with findings from Cruz et al. (2021), where community trust and social recognition sustained barangay tanods' motivation amid COVID-19 challenges, and Asis (2020), which linked community service recognition to effective performance. (Austria-Cruz, 2020) further supports this, showing public trust as integral to intrinsic motivation and accountability in maintaining peace and order. Similarly, (Empinado et al., 2024) demonstrated how community trust and volunteerism enhanced tanods' competence as first responders, independent of demographics. (O'Connor et al., 2022) in the Canadian context echoed these patterns, with institutional and community recognition boosting volunteer retention among auxiliary police. These findings highlight the critical role of social feedback in sustaining participation, emphasizing that community validation and respect are central to the effectiveness and persistence of frontline public safety volunteers.

Organizational and Leadership Support. Organizational and leadership support emerged as a recurring theme that significantly influenced the motivation, performance, and retention of police auxiliaries. Support from police officers, barangay officials, and local government units played a critical role in shaping job satisfaction and engagement. Clear communication, fair supervision, recognition from formal authorities, and supportive leadership were consistently linked to higher motivation and sustained participation. For example, Mendoza et al. (2024) identified peer support and leadership as key to sustaining police auxiliaries' motivation during COVID-19 frontline duties. (Turno et al., 2023) similarly showed that positive leadership and community engagement improved performance among barangay police security officers. Organizational practices that promote inclusion, provide meaningful feedback, and acknowledge volunteer contributions foster a positive climate that strengthens commitment. Participants who felt adequately supported reported greater confidence in carrying out their duties and a stronger desire to continue serving. (Osman et al., 2024) confirmed that training and supervision from organizational structures enhanced auxiliary performance in community awareness initiatives. These findings underscore that leadership quality and institutional backing are key determinants of volunteer engagement, with clear supervision, fair treatment, and organizational recognition enhancing both performance and dedication among auxiliaries.

Training and Competency Development. Training and capacity-building opportunities were consistently identified as strong enhancers of motivation and performance among police auxiliaries. Access to structured training, skills development, and knowledge-building programs significantly increased participants' confidence, competence, and effectiveness in carrying out their duties. For instance, (Alamban et al., 2024) demonstrated that competency training and community trust enhanced auxiliary police effectiveness through targeted capability programs. Studies show that well-trained auxiliaries feel more capable and empowered, which strengthens both intrinsic motivation and perceived legitimacy in their roles. Participants frequently reported that training not only improved their practical ability to perform tasks but also enhanced their sense of personal growth, self-efficacy, and professional identity. (Aydinan, 2021) linked higher knowledge levels from skills development to improved motivation and performance among barangay police safety officers. By fostering skill mastery and reinforcing confidence, competency development serves a dual purpose: it functions as a practical enabler of better performance and a psychological motivator that sustains engagement and commitment in community policing contexts.

Incentives, Compensation, and Job Satisfaction. While intrinsic motivation remained central, financial and non-financial incentives were also important drivers of job satisfaction and retention among police auxiliaries and barangay tanods. Allowances, honoraria, insurance benefits, equipment, logistical support, and access to social protection programs significantly enhanced participants' satisfaction and willingness to continue service. Non-monetary incentives, such as certificates of recognition, awards, and opportunities for advancement, further reinforced motivation and engagement. (Wakat, 2024) explicitly analyzed how financial and non-financial incentives improved motivation and job satisfaction among barangay peacekeeping personnel. Conversely, inadequate or inconsistent incentives were associated with reduced morale, lower motivation, and higher attrition rates. Although material rewards were not the primary reason participants joined, they contributed to a sense of being valued and helped remove barriers to sustained participation. (Bengson et al., 2017) noted honorariums and recognition as key to barangay public safety officers' awareness and sustained duties. These

findings reflect the multidimensional nature of motivation, in which intrinsic commitment to public service interacts with extrinsic rewards to support continued engagement, performance, and retention in auxiliary and volunteer roles.

Resilience Amid Challenges & Occupational Risks. Police auxiliary motivations evolved over time, with many demonstrating resilience and adaptive strategies in the face of operational challenges. Despite exposure to physical risks, high workloads, role ambiguity, and limited resources, barangay tanods and police auxiliaries often remained committed to their duties. Mendoza et al. (2024) illustrated this resilience, as police auxiliaries drew on public service motivation, peer support, and leadership to sustain frontline engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic. They drew on a combination of intrinsic motivations, such as personal values and civic duty, as well as external sources of support, including peer encouragement and community appreciation, to sustain engagement. Cruz et al. (2021) similarly documented how barangay tanods adapted through altruism, responsibility, and community recognition amid pandemic hardships. Turno et al. (2023) extended these insights, showing how leadership and community engagement helped barangay police security officers overcome challenges to improve performance. This persistence reflects a complex interplay between individual commitment, social support structures, and adaptive coping mechanisms that enable continued service under stressful and constrained institutional conditions. The dynamic nature of motivation in these contexts highlights that sustained participation is not only driven by initial motives but also shaped by evolving personal and social resources, reinforcing resilience and dedication in community-oriented roles.

	Title	Authors / Year / Country	Research Design	Participants	Brief Description of the Study	Motivational Factors Identified	Key Findings
1	Effectiveness of Barangay Tanods in Maintaining Peace and Order in the Municipality of Bayambang	Asis, Jeffrey De (2020) / Philippines	Quantitative, Descriptive	Barangay Tanods	Examined the effectiveness of barangay tanods in maintaining peace and order within local communities.	Sense of duty; community service; recognition	Barangay tanods demonstrated effective performance driven by commitment to community service and duty.
2	Reinforcing the Frontlines: Experiences of Police Auxiliary during the COVID-19 Pandemic	Mendoza, Jayrie; Sabijon, Dodelon; Sayson, Yolanda; et al. (2024) / Philippines	Qualitative, Phenomenological	Police Auxiliaries	Explored the lived experiences of police auxiliaries assigned to frontline security duties.	Public service motivation; peer support; leadership	Strong service orientation and teamwork sustained motivation despite occupational risks.
3	The Challenges and Lived Experiences of the Barangay Tanods: A Phenomenological Qualitative Study in the Philippines during COVID-19 Pandemic	Cruz, Rhoyet; Frontuna, Eden; Tus, Jhoselle (2021) / Philippines	Qualitative	Barangay Tanods	Investigated challenges and lived experiences of barangay tanods in community policing roles during COVID-19 Pandemic	Altruism; responsibility; community recognition	Community trust and social recognition sustained motivation amid challenges.

4	Community Awareness and Performance of Revitalized Pulis sa Barangay in the City of Mati, Philippines	Osman, Roselyn Mae; Denson, Reygin D.; Javier, et al. (2024) / Philippines	Mixed Methods	Police Auxiliaries	Assessed organizational conditions and support systems influencing auxiliary police performance.	Training opportunities; organizational support	Training and supervision enhanced motivation and performance.
5	Exploring Performance and Challenges Faced by Tanods	Wakat, Irene M. (2024) / Philippines	Quantitative	Barangay Peacekeeping Personnel	Analyzed the relationship between incentives, job satisfaction, and motivation among barangay peacekeepers.	Incentives; job satisfaction	Financial and non-financial incentives improved motivation.
6	Auxiliary Police Volunteer Experiences and Motivations to Volunteer in Canada	O'Connor, Christopher D.; Frederick, Tyler; Kozak, et al. (2022) / Canada	Quantitative	Auxiliary Police Volunteers	Examined factors influencing motivation and retention among auxiliary police volunteers.	Organizational commitment; recognition	Institutional recognition increased volunteer motivation and retention.
7	Determinant Mapping on the Knowledge of Barangay Police Safety Officers on their Duties and Responsibilities in San Roque, San Isidro, Nueva Ecija: A Basis for Re-Engineering Action through Suc Intervention	Aydinan, Januaryn Jose B. (2021) / Philippines	Quantitative	Barangay Tanods	Mapped determinants of knowledge and their relationship to barangay tanods' performance.	Knowledge; skills development	Higher knowledge levels were associated with improved motivation and performance.
8	Knowledge Mapping of the Auxiliary Police: A Basis for Crafting a Capability	Alamban, Ariel A.; Poquita, John Mark C.; Procurador, et al. (2024)	Quantitative	Auxiliary Police	Assessed competency levels and their influence on auxiliary police effectiveness.	Competence; training; community trust	Competency development enhanced motivation and effectiveness.

	Training Program	/ Philippines					
9	Performance of Barangay Police Security Officers (BPSO) or Tanod in Maintaining Peace and Order	Austria-Cruz, Mary Chris (2020) / Philippines	Quantitative	Barangay Police Security Officers or Tanods	Evaluated performance levels of barangay police security officers in community settings.	Duty; public trust	Intrinsic motivation and accountability were linked to performance.
10	Performance of Barangay Police Security Officers: Developing Interventions	Turno, Cheribel S.; Bildo, Jessa M.; Lahiban, et al. (2023) / Philippines	Mixed Methods	Barangay Police Security Officers	Examined leadership and community engagement factors affecting officer performance.	Community support; leadership	Positive leadership and engagement improved motivation and performance.
11	Strengthening Community Safety: Awareness of Barangay in Public Safety Officers on their duties and responsibilities	Empinado, Grace A.; Dr. Pioquinto, Paulino V.; Alolor, Gilbert, et al. (2024) / Philippines	Quantitative	Community Residents	Assessed the level of competence of barangay tanods as first responders in terms of response time, preservation of crime scene, traffic control, and coordination with the PNP.	Sense of duty and volunteerism, community trust, coordination with PNP, perceived competence and training exposure	Barangay tanods demonstrated a high level of competence across all indicators. No significant difference was found when grouped according to sex and age, indicating consistent performance regardless of demographic factors.
12	Level of Competence of Barangay Tanod as First Responder	Bengson, April joy R.; Glase, Patrick John P.; Ogwon, Janrey Gil D. (2017) / Philippines	Quantitative	Barangay Public Safety Officers	Examined the level of awareness of BPSOs regarding their duties and responsibilities based on DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2003-42, covering patrolling, traffic control, arrest, search, and crime information campaigns.	Training opportunities, role clarity, coordination with local authorities, community engagement, honorarium and recognition	BPSOs were generally very aware of their duties, particularly in patrolling, coordination with authorities, and crime prevention. Areas needing improvement included fire code enforcement and preservation of accident scenes, highlighting the need for continuous training.

Table 5. Summary of Included Studies on Motivational Factors Influencing Policing Support Units**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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CONCLUSION

Based on the PRISMA-guided systematic review, twelve (12) studies published between 2015 and 2025 were included to examine motivation among police auxiliaries, barangay tanods, and community safety volunteers. The synthesis identified six key motivational determinants: intrinsic motivation and public service commitment, community recognition, organizational and leadership support, training and competency development, incentives, and resilience to occupational challenges. These findings underscore the need for institutionalized support mechanisms to sustain engagement and effectiveness in community-based policing support units. Further empirical and context-specific studies are recommended to strengthen the evidence base and guide policy development.

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