Status of *Padyak* Drivers in Rosary Heights, Cotabato City

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to find out the status of the *padyak* or pedicab drivers in Rosary Heights 4, Cotabato City. The study utilized both quantitative design which described the socio-demographic profile of the respondents and qualitative design that determined the life experiences, reasons why these respondents engaged into driving *padyak* and common problems they encountered. An interview guide questionnaire was used to elicit information from the respondents. In the collection of data, purposive sampling technique was employed with the assistance of the barangay chairman and dispatcher who recommended the respondents of the study.

Keywords: Displacements, Internal Armed Conflict, Unemployment, *Padyak* driver
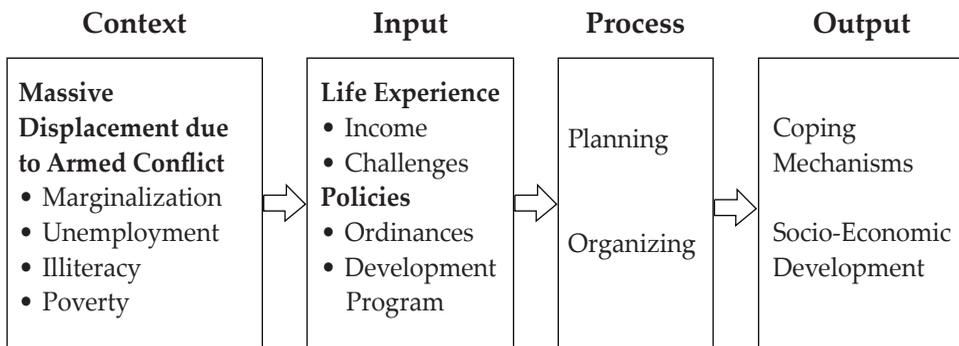
INTRODUCTION

The increase in the number of cases of poverty incidents in Cotabato City has been linked to the problem of displacements in the previous years. The occurrence of human-induced activities also added to unfavourable economic conditions of poor sectors of the present society. Many surveys have found that majority of these displaced families had stayed in the cities to find most instant means of survival.

According to Mindanao Tulong Bakwet Survey (2003), in the recent internal armed conflict in Southern Philippines, there were more than 600,000 displaced families that fled from their hometowns and moved to other areas where they can easily find means of survival. Fathers of the displaced families started to work as *padyak* drivers in the corners of the streets in Cotabato City. Children are also involved in this occupation. The case of *padyak* drivers is one pilot study among the many cases in the entire 37 barangays of Cotabato City.

The study sought to find answers to the following research problems:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of age, religion, educational attainment, income, civil status and years in driving?
2. What are the life experiences of the *padyak* drivers in Rosary Heights 4?
3. Why do the drivers prefer to engage in driving *padyak*?
4. What are the common problems encountered by the drivers?

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Context	**Input**	**Process**	**Output**
Massive Displacement due to Armed Conflict • Marginalization • Unemployment • Illiteracy • Poverty	**Life Experience** • Income • Challenges **Policies** • Ordinances • Development Program	Planning Organizing	Coping Mechanisms Socio-Economic Development

METHODOLOGY

This research utilized both quantitative and qualitative design. The quantitative was used in the socio-demographic profile while the qualitative was employed in the gathering of information pertaining to the life experience of the drivers.

As described in the vicinity map of the barangays in Cotabato City, Rosary Heights 4 is one of the 37 barangays in Cotabato City that has many terminals due to its proximity to various big schools.

The collection of data used was purposive sampling techniques. Respondents were chosen with the assistance of the barangay chairman and the dispatcher who recommended the respondents of the study. 30 selected *padyak* drivers were interviewed to supplement the gathered data.

The interview guide for *padyak* drivers was composed of 4 parts: Part I - Socio Demographic Profile, Part II - Life Experiences, Part III - Respondents Reason for choosing the occupation and Part IV - Common .

Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews were administered. Observation and field visits were also used in this study in order to provide deep analysis and profound interpretation of the data.

The researcher sent a letter to the barangay officials for the purpose of conducting an interview with the *padyak* drivers in the barangay. After the approval of the letter, the researcher went to the field to gather data through field interview and focus group discussion.

Statistical Treatment of Data

There were two approaches used in analyzing and interpreting the data:

1. Quantitative Approach was used in the analysis of data resulting from the survey questionnaire. The statistical tool used was the frequency counts; this was used to summarize the answers and responses of the respondents on Part I survey questionnaire.
2. Qualitative Approach was used in analyzing and interpreting the data on survey questionnaire on Part II, III, and IV. In this statistical tool, the researcher used qualitative method in the interpretation of the data.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Socio Demographic Profile

The finding shows that 12 of the respondents have ages ranging from 31-40 years old and makes up 40% of the respondents. They comprise the highest percentage and is followed by 8 respondents who belong to the 21-30 years old age bracket at 26%. Next are 7 respondents from the 15-20 years old range at 24%. Further, there are only 3 respondents, or 10%, who belong to the 40-50 years old group.
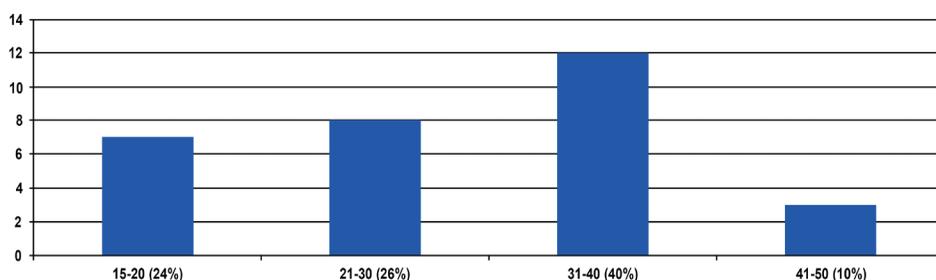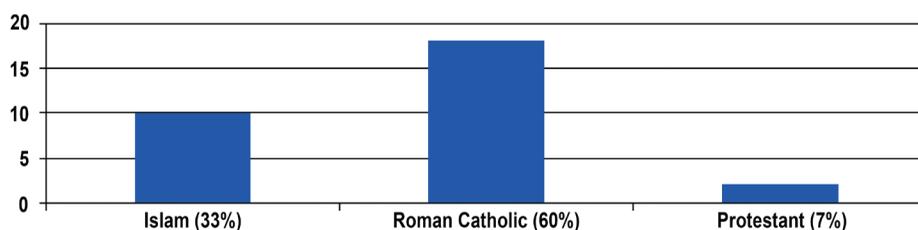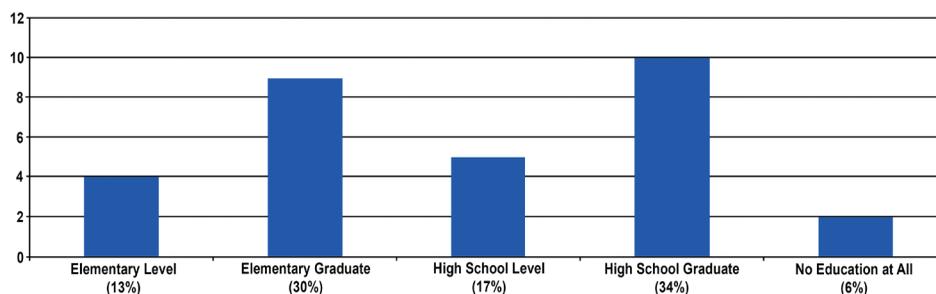
Figure 1. Age of the Respondents

Figure 2. Religion of the Respondents

It reveals that majority of the respondents, 18 of 30 or 60%, are Roman Catholic. Basically, the barangay has a greater number of Christians. 10 of the respondents or 33% are Muslim, and there are 2, or 7%, who are Protestant.
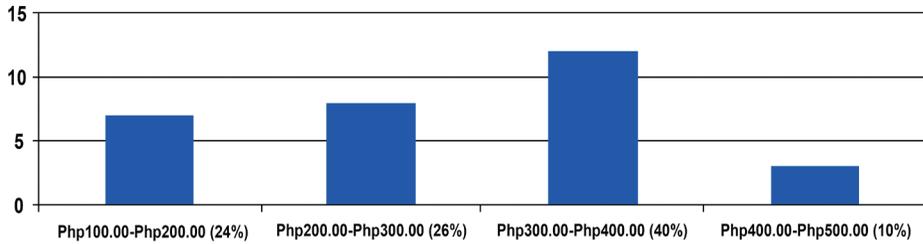
Figure 3. Educational Attainment of the Respondents

Most of the respondents, 10 of 30 or 34%, are high school graduates, followed by 9 elementary graduates at 30%. In addition to that, during the focus group discussion, the respondents revealed that they did not pursue
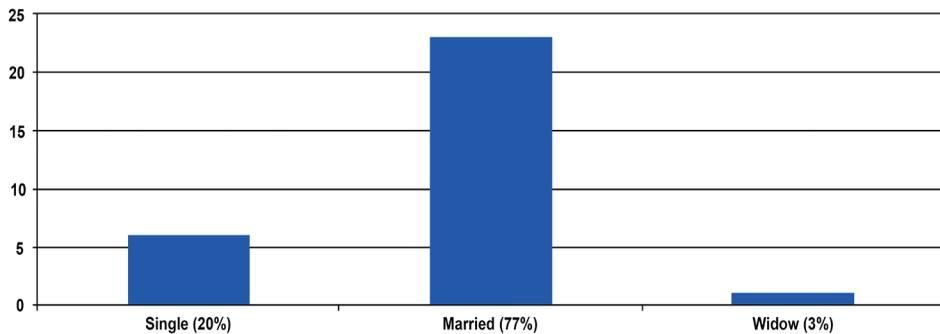
a higher level of education due to financial constraints. Moreover, there are 5 or 17% who reached high school and 4 or 13% who dropped out at the grade school level. There are also 2 or 6% of the respondents who were not able to go to school even in grade 1.

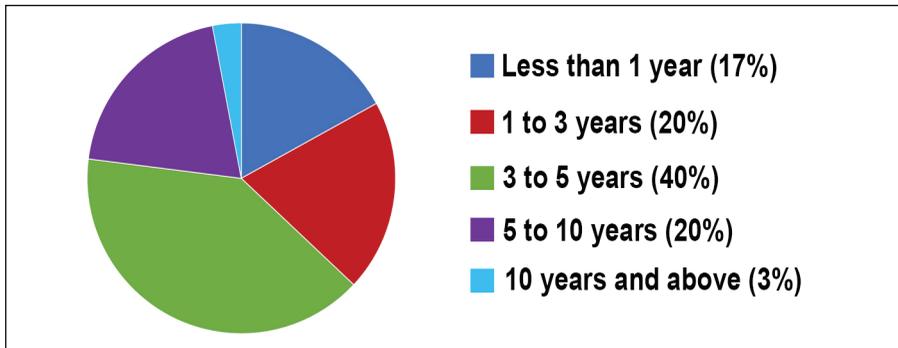**Figure 4.** Daily Income of the Respondents

It shows that majority of the respondents, 12 of 30 or 40%, earn income of about Php300.00 to Php400.00 a day, followed by 8 respondents at 26%, who earn Php200.00 to Php300.00. It means that the respondents are satisfied with their earnings and *padyak* driving is their coping strategy to sustain the financial needs of their family. There are also 7 respondents or 24% who earn Php100.00 to Php200.00. Lastly, there are 3 or 10% whose income per day is Php400.00 to Php500.00.

Figure 5. Civil Status of the Respondents

Out of 30 respondents, there are 23 or 77% who are married, 6 or 20% who are single and who are currently studying and 1 who is a widow, comprising the final 3%.

Figure 6. Years in Driving of the Respondents

Legend:
- Less than 1 year (17%)
- 1 to 3 years (20%)
- 3 to 5 years (40%)
- 5 to 10 years (20%)
- 10 years and above (3%)

This data shows that majority of the respondents engaged in *padyak* driving for almost 5 years comprising forty percent (40%). This is because after 5 years, some of them have shifted to a different job, and besides, the respondents revealed in the interview that many consider five years ago as the most critical years and crises-hit year for them.

Life Experience

1. Less than one year is the lowest engagement of any of the respondents in *padyak* driving while 20 years is the highest. Most of them came from neighboring conflict affected municipalities of Maguindanao.
2. Most of the respondents describe themselves as happy because of the income they earn during the day which sustains the financial needs of their family.
3. Most of the respondents revealed that *padyak* driving is challenging with less expenses and less prone to accident.
4. One of them had sons graduate college through *padyak* driving, and they were proud of this occupation.

Respondents Reasons for Engaging in *Padyak* Driving

1. The main reason why they choose to be a *padyak* driver is that they are satisfied with their earnings, and that the occupation is able to provide for their families.
2. Displacement during war necessitated the need to adapt and learn a new trade.

3. Lack of education is also a contributing factor on why they got involved in *padyak* driving

Common Problems Encountered

1. The finding in an actual interview shows that their daily collections or income declined due to the increasing availability of *Habal-Habal* (single motorcycles) in the area. They enjoy an increase in earnings only during rainy seasons.
2. Sometimes they are treated like laborers; some of their rights are violated.
3. They don't have their personal *padyak*. They just rent in order to provide for the needs of their families.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following are concluded:

1. The *padyak* drivers in Rosary Heights 4 are satisfied with their occupation.
2. Majority of the respondents are from poor families of conflict-affected areas. As providers for Internally Displaced Families, they are able to survive through *padyak* driving.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following are recommended:

1. The city government should provide assistance for the drivers to help address their problems.
2. The law enforcers should establish mechanisms to protect the lives of the drivers.
3. Institutionalize the said occupation by providing licenses and papers for sustainability.
4. Non-Government Organizations should implement projects to help the *padyak* drivers.

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