

Original Research

The 6TH PILLAR of Philippine Criminal Justice System: Personnel Perceptions of TV Mediation Program — Raffy Tulfo in Action

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ABSTRACT

Under Article III, Section 14 (2) of the 1987 Constitution of the Philippines upholds the right of the accused to a speedy trial, it highlights the obligation of the system to avoid any undue delay to the public but also provide continuous help to the Filipino people however the Philippine Criminal Justice System (PCJS) has been in dire needs of resolving as the community grievances and issues are usually not being given proper attention. As such, the community seeks new and alternative ways of obtaining justice. Raffy Tulfo in Action (RTIA), a TV mediation program has provided this alternative method that the public believe as “just”. This study seeks to understand how PCJS personnel perceive RTIA in terms of its effectiveness in resolving conflicts quickly compared to traditional methods, and to determine the impact of RTIA on the PCJS based on the perceptions of public servants. This study employed a quantitative approach utilizing a descriptive survey design. Results indicate that the impact of RTIA varies among Filipinos depending on their socio-economic circumstances. While most participants originate from middle to low-income backgrounds, individuals with higher earnings and esteemed occupations tend to perceived RTIA as less effective in resolving conflicts. This incongruity encourages further investigation into the underlying reasons for these differing viewpoints and emphasizes the necessity of exploring the perspectives of affluent individuals to comprehend the intricacies of RTIA's effectiveness across a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds such as the participant’s profile.

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INTRODUCTION

The judicial branch of the government expects itself to produce speedy and impartial trials according to Republic Act No. 8493 or the Speedy Trial Act of 1988. In pursuant to meet the objective of de-clogging the dockets of courts, the Barangay’s Lupon has the authority to provide subpoenas to both parties in certain conditions of all disputes for amicable settlement (Project Jurisprudence, n.d.)

As stated in the local government code of the Philippines Book, Under Section 384, the primary political subdivision in the Philippines is the barangay. The barangay provides primary assistance in serving, planning, and implementing the policies and activities of the government. Officials of the "barangay" are required by Section 30 of Republic Act 9262 to address the communities complaints. Given that they are the closest to people's homes, barangays play a significant part in the Philippine justice system by receiving complaints and suggesting a fair procedure to resolve any problems. A forum where the public's opinions can be heard collectively, where differences can be amicably handled, and where ideas are aired, developed, and investigated. Moreover, it can execute an amicable settlement as a remedy for small disputes through the Katarungang Pambarangay Law or the Barangay Justice System (Sec. 384 of Local Government Code of 1991). However, this does not address big cases or disputes. Not to mention the rampant number of cases that the lower courts handle. This issue reflects on the Supreme Court (SC) which holds a larger and wider range of cases wherein the prominent issue is the de-clogging of the dockets of the backlogs and undue delay of cases (Ciocchini, 2019). Hence, this leads people who are seeking justice to opt for other alternative resolution systems.

According to Section 1 of the Bill of Rights, "no one shall be deprived of their life, liberty, or property without first receiving due process of law nor be excluded from receiving equal legal protection". Everyone has the legal right to due process, and failing to provide due process is punishable by law. This affirms that everybody has the right to request assistance with their concerns. However, despite this right, the Philippine Criminal

Justice System (PCJS) has been criticized for their sloth-paced system, their tendency for backlogs and unprocessed documents and its overall inaccessibility to the people.

According to Abad (2020), While the Philippines has improved its position by five places higher since 2021, it remains one of the worst in the region in the World Justice Project Rule of Law Index; it is ranked 13th out of 15th in East Asia and Pacific which is equivalent to 97th place out of 140 countries worldwide. This situation poses a great threat to the credibility of the Philippine Criminal Justice System. It shows how weak the justice system is and provides enough reason for the citizens to disregard the Philippine Criminal Justice System.

According to Lao (2019), despite the fact that the country has a significant number of groups that provide free legal aid, the poor continue to face enormous challenges. People seek help within the 'public system' – line or government agencies, the barangay, or the justice system; however, they fail to acquire service within the Criminal Justice System.

Hence, people, especially the lower and/or poor sectors, resort to alternative ways that cater to their case. One of which is the TV mediation program – Raffy Tulfo in Action (RTIA), people perceived this program as their last bastion of hope. This program is a trial by publicity (Lao, 2019), where they agree on the public thoughts regarding a certain situation.

Lao (2019) asserted that RTIA is an instant justice, where prone to fallible and abuse for it is extralegal. Fast justice, or justice on air, is an area of expertise of the aforementioned television program. For this reason, Raffy Tulfo in Action, a television program, has drawn a lot of judgments and complaints because of allegations that it violates the

rule of law by omitting the legal process and damages the character of the accused. Today's society has lost confidence in and faith in our legal system; rather than relying on an expensive and stressful court system, they see TV shows as the quickest and most efficient way to ensure that the weak, the abused, and the despairing are heard and receive justice.

There is a tendency for people to see the TV show as an alternative tool or mechanism for obtaining justice, as stated by Eugenio (2020). Citizens continue to bypass the PCJS, turning their heads to the TV show to gain their needed justice and completely ignoring the country's own justice system.

It may appear as instant justice, for it skips the due process, but it is also the kind of help that will serve the poor. Taking account of the mentioned circumstances, this study emphasizes the lack of development in the criminal justice system of the Philippines; thus, people tend to seek alternative ways to experience justice. Hence, the study explores the view of the professionals in various justice systems -- on how they perceive the alternative way of acquiring justice, such as a TV mediation program like Raffy Tulfo in Action.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study utilized a quantitative approach through a descriptive survey design to determine the

perception of the Philippine Criminal Justice System Personnel to TV Mediation Program – Raffy Tulfo in Action. A simple random probability sampling method to acquire a random respondent within the population.

Ethical Considerations

The study ensures that strict ethical procedures were followed and each respondent was provided an informed consent form prior to the survey for the confidentiality and safety privacy of the respondent.

Statistical Analysis

Data were analyzed through frequency for the profile of the respondent. Furthermore, tests of normality were conducted through the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to determine whether the Kruskal-wallis test or the ANOVA test will be used depending on the distribution of data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The data in Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the respondents, categorized by sex, age, highest educational attainment, profession, and monthly income.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	49	67.1
Female	24	32.9
Total	73	100.0
Age		

< 21	2	2.7
21-25	16	21.9
26-30	29	39.7
31-35	16	21.9
36-40	7	9.6
41-45	1	1.4
46-50	2	2.7
Total	73	100.0
Highest Education		
Tertiary level graduate	60	82.2
Tertiary level	9	12.3
Secondary level graduate (JHS)	1	1.4
Secondary level graduate (SHS)	3	4.1
Total	73	100.0
Profession		
Law enforcers	17	23.3
Legal Practitioners	17	23.3
Jail Officers	17	23.3
Private Individuals	22	30.1
Total	73	100.0
Monthly Income		
10000-25000	16	21.9
25001-50000	33	45.2
50001-70000	9	12.3
70001 and above	15	20.5
Total	73	100.0
Average Monthly Income: 22,311.40		

The majority sex of the respondents is male with 67.1%. Considering that a majority of the respondents were either law enforcers, law practitioners and jail officers which are a male-dominated professions, it is understandable why there were more males than females in the study. Highest frequency in the respondents is 26-30 age. Respondents' predominance are tertiary-level graduates with a majority composed of 60 over 73 or 82.2% among the respondents highlighting the

importance of education in this population. The respondents are divided into four (4) categories; with 23.3% to law enforcers, law practitioners, jail officers, and 30.1% to private individuals. Most of the respondents fall within the middle-income range of 25,000 to 50,000 with 33 or 45.25% average income level of the population. The presence of respondents in higher income brackets of ₱70,000 and above. This is about the same number of respondents with the lowest income bracket at

₱10,000-₱25,000 with 16 or 21.9 percent of respondents. The average monthly income of the respondents is ₱22,311.40 which as per data of Ibon Facts and Figures pegged the poverty threshold in the same year at ₱23,660 (ibon.org, 2019). If this figure

is taken as the more realistic description of the poverty threshold situation in the country, then it can be said that generally, the respondents were below the poverty threshold.

Table 2. Mean Ratings of the Respondents of the Philippine Criminal Justice System personnel perception of the effectiveness of RTIA in providing expedited conflict resolution compared to traditional legal avenues.

Indicators	Mean Ratings				Interpretation
	LE	LP	PI	Average	
1. RTIA's mediation process is perceived as more efficient in resolving conflicts compared to traditional legal proceedings	2.18	1.71	2.59	2.11	Somewhat Effective
2. RTIA often achieves quicker resolution times for cases compared to the typical duration of legal proceedings.	2.24	1.82	2.82	2.25	Somewhat Effective
3. The outcomes of RTIA interventions are generally viewed as satisfactory by involved parties.	2.12	1.82	2.73	2.21	Somewhat Effective
4. RTIA's approach to conflict resolution is seen as more accessible and user-friendly than traditional legal avenues.	2.00	1.94	2.86	2.26	Somewhat Effective
5. The involvement of RTIA leads to reduced bureaucratic hurdles and delays in resolving disputes.	2.00	1.94	3.00	2.37	Somewhat Effective
6. RTIA effectively addresses common grievances and concerns encountered by individuals seeking justice.	2.24	1.88	2.95	2.34	Somewhat Effective
7. The transparency and accountability of RTIA procedures contribute to its perceived effectiveness in conflict resolution.	2.12	1.76	2.77	2.11	Somewhat Effective
8. RTIA's mediation outcomes often result in mutually beneficial agreements between conflicting parties.	1.94	1.53	2.77	2.25	Somewhat Effective
9. RTIA's mediation process is perceived as promoting amicable resolutions that preserve relationships between parties.	2.00	1.65	2.77	2.21	Somewhat Effective

10. Overall, RTIA is considered to have a higher success rate in resolving conflicts compared to traditional legal channels.	1.82	1.59	2.73	2.26	Somewhat Effective
<i>Composite Mean</i>	2.06	1.76	2.80	2.37	Somewhat Effective

*Legend: LE - Law Enforcers, LP - Law Practitioners, JO - Jail Officers, PI - Private Individuals; Rating: 3.51 - 4.00 = Highly Effective, 1.51 - 2.50 = Somewhat effective, 2.51 - 3.50 = Effective, 1.00 - 1.50 = Not Effective

Table 4. Analysis of Variance and T-test Data to Determine Significant Difference in the Assessment of the Effectiveness of RTIA in Expediting Conflict Resolution

Source of Variation		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Age	Between Groups	14.202	22	.646	.865	.636
	Within Groups	37.320	50	.746		
	Total	51.522	72			
Highest Education	Between Groups	5.274	3	1.758	2.62	.057
	Within Groups	46.248	69	.670	3	
	Total	51.522	72			
Profession	Between Groups	11.260	3	3.753	6.43	.001
	Within Groups	40.262	69	.584	2	
	Total	51.522	72			
Monthly Income	Between Groups	14.825	3	4.942	9.29	.0
	Within Groups	36.697	69	.532	2	
	Total	51.522	72			
T-Test for Independent Samples						
Sex	t = 278	df = 71		$\alpha = .782$		

Philippine Criminal Justice System Personnel Perception of Effectiveness of Raffy Tulfo in Action (RTIA) in Providing expedited Conflict Resolution Compared to Traditional Legal Avenues

The PCJS Personnel perceived that the effectiveness of RTIA in providing expedited conflict resolution compared to traditional legal avenues is somewhat effective which garnered a mean of 2.37.

Average of the respondents have acknowledged some degree of effectiveness but improvements or adjustments are needed for better outcomes (somewhat effective) on the following:"

- RTIA's mediation process is perceived as more efficient in resolving conflicts compared to traditional legal proceedings with average of 2.11;
- RTIA often achieves quicker resolution times for cases compared to the typical

duration of legal proceedings with average of 2.25

- The outcomes of RTIA interventions are generally viewed as satisfactory by involved parties with average of 2.21;
- RTIA's approach to conflict resolution is seen as more accessible and user-friendly than traditional legal avenues with average of 2.26;
- The involvement of RTIA leads to reduced bureaucratic hurdles and delays in resolving disputes with average of 2.37;
- RTIA effectively addresses common grievances and concerns encountered by individuals seeking justice with average of 2.34;
- The transparency and accountability of RTIA procedures contribute to its perceived effectiveness in conflict resolution with average of 2.11;
- RTIA's mediation outcomes often result in mutually beneficial agreements between conflicting parties with average of 2.25;
- RTIA's mediation process is perceived as promoting amicable resolutions that preserve relationships between parties with average of 2.21; and
- Overall, RTIA is considered to have a higher success rate in resolving conflicts compared to traditional legal channels with an average of 2.26.

CONCLUSION

The participants of the study see Raffy Tulfo in Action as an influential element within the Philippine Civil Justice System. They perceive Tulfo effective in mediating issues because RTIA provides

extensive benefits such as monetary assistance, guidance to file reports to the nearest government agency. they also provide the help of their personal connection compared to traditional avenues.

The profession and income of the participants affect their perception, those of lower income do see RTIA helpful, contrary to the professionals with those who have higher income, they perceive RTIA as less effective.

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DECLARATION REGARDING GENERATIVE AI IN SCIENTIFIC WRITING

The authors declare that no generative artificial intelligence (AI) or AI-assisted technologies were used at any stage of the study.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest relevant to this study.

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