



Media as Propaganda for Law Enforcement and Justice in the Philippines

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Abstract

The poor justice system in the Philippines intensifies poverty among underprivileged people. It leaves them with no choice but to handle conflicts through Trial by Publicity or go to radio or TV stations and programs for their brawls to broadcast. The belief that immediate justice will be served made these Filipinos continuously choose these avenues to resolve disputes. This quantitative study uses the descriptive-evaluative method since this study assessed the perspectives to trial by publicity among barangay citizens, officials, and media practitioners. This study surveyed 270 respondents composed of barangay constituents and officials from the three identified barangays of Naga and media practitioners. Results showed that the barangay citizens, officials, and media practitioners are highly aware of trial by publicity regarding objectives, procedure, and judgment. It was also concluded that the trial by publicity is irrefutably one way of influencing the public through media by catching the audience's attention, giving them what they want to be sure of without in-depth analysis and exploration.

Keywords: media, society, the justice system, local government level

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INTRODUCTION

Journalism is a new tool for information diffusion. The press and media have long been regarded as the fourth pillar of the American Constitution. It is impossible to deny that the media has enormous sway over the public. It has become a watchdog, becoming the people's voice in reporting injustices and leveraging its power to bring transparency to the system. According to House (2017), freedom of journalistic speech is especially vital since the press serves as a watchdog of the public interest, and the free flow of information in a democratic society also aids in the protection of all of our other rights.

The power of the media as the people's eye for truth and justice has evolved to levels far beyond free speech. People chose to disregard the importance of due process and fair trial because of the availability of television and radio programs whose concept is to invite ordinary people to come on the show and discuss a legal problem they are having in the hopes of getting it resolved faster than if they filed paperwork at their town hall. This trial by publicity strategy of incorrect assumptions and unsupported hunches jeopardizes not just people's reputations, but also their lives and, worse, their futures. Similar to how terrorist organizations exploit platforms like YouTube for propaganda, media outlets often sensationalize legal issues to attract viewers, creating narratives that can overshadow facts and due process (Katz 2018). According to Arcilla (2019), a group of teachers protested this particular TV personality after the latter bullied a public school teacher and urged her to withdraw her license on national television over an alleged "child abuse" event, according to the student's parents' complaint. Though the Department of Education (DepEd) has already settled the matter between the instructor and the parents, many people are still talking critically about the situation because of the outrage produced by the nationally publicized occurrence. This phenomenon is exacerbated by media multitasking, where audiences engage with multiple media sources simultaneously, leading to fragmented attention and reduced critical engagement with content (Magen 2017). This expedition of the media interrogating and raising voices against the accused has somewhere along the road lost its precious integrity and ethics. It has established a vicious loop of enticing more viewers to their news stations by spectacular headlines in order to enhance their TRP ratings and income. As a result, the media has become prejudiced and politically motivated rather than unbiased and critical to the greatest extent feasible.

The Philippine Constitution, the highest law in the land, protects every Filipino citizen's right to due process (Quianzon, 2019). However, due to people's fascination with these TV and radio programs that bypass what the Constitution calls "due process," such an approach causes people to see the negative impacts it could have on someone's life. A trial by media, according to Greer and McLaughlin (2011), is a dynamic process in which people are exposed to public opinion and condemned without being heard. Similar to how social media platforms face scrutiny for allowing extremist content to proliferate, media outlets often engage in sensationalized reporting that undermines the rights of individuals involved in high-profile cases (Tsesis 2017). A person is deemed innocent until proven guilty under due process. This guarantees the person the right to be heard and informed of all the consequences of being brought to trial. Being called out on a national show revokes this constitutional protection and forces a person to the pressure of consenting to the conditions on the moment, as most accused are forced to do.

This approach's popularity over the years has made people believe it is the most accessible way to win justice. Newburn and Peay (2012) stated that media is utilized to exercise parallel parts of justice, which implies its effect on the judiciary. Moreover, since it bypasses what the constitution dictates, it expects to threaten the country's judicial system. Ray and Dutta (2015) emphasized that since newspapers, radio, and television are disseminating information and determining the topics people are interested in, certain crimes receive extensive media publicity, posing difficulty to the parties in the legal procedures.

Being the first one on the line of the judicial system, barangay officials play a critical role in dispensing barangay justice. Benter (2020) found that the members of the barangay justice were only moderately responsive in terms of their being responsive among respondents. Furthermore, there is still room for improvement in the performance of roles and responsibilities on the part of the "upon and pangkat." According to Murphy et al. (2017), many of the filed cases were resolved with the help of the barangay justice system; however, robbery/theft and trespassing were the cases that were frequently not resolved due to a lack of evidence and the identities of who committed the offenses. These shortcomings are evident representations of why people choose to avoid the local justice system in favor of a much more exposed method of seeking justice - the trial by publicity.

Media freedom today is perceived as the freedom of the People. Also, it is free to emphasize that every citizen has a right to be aware of all matters affecting them through media and publicity. Media in the present day is one of the most powerful entities that it influences and builds public judgment as the word spreads are recognized to be true without validating its legitimacy. TV programs seem to steal the primary idea that governs trial, which is "Guilty beyond reasonable doubt" and "Innocent until proven guilty." (Prakash 2020).

In the Philippines, one of the key indicators of poverty is a lack of access to justice. It forces underprivileged people to create informal systems to deal with their conflicts, such as going to TV stations/programs and radio stations to have their problems/conflicts broadcasted to the world, as well as an avenue for TV programs to profit from these concerns, which are often more dangerous for the poorest of the poor. Del Villar (2009) notes that the communication performance of Filipino students is influenced by various factors, including the impact of information and communication technology (ICT), which can also play a role in how communities address their conflicts. Most viewers mock their disagreements, humiliating not only the people involved but also their family members and relatives. Furthermore, the lack of genuine access to civil and social rights that poor people are entitled to as Filipino citizens fosters an oppressive society that further distances them from a feeling of citizenship. As a result, they exacerbate their inexcusable social, political, and economic discrimination, exacerbating their precarious predicament.

The participants in this study are the ones who are primarily affected by issues involving trial by publicity – the barangay citizens, barangay officials, and media practitioners. In identifying the involved barangays, the top 3 barangays such as Barangay Lerma, Barangay Abella, and Barangay Triangulo in Naga City that have the most crime rates based on the 2020 Annual Report of the Philippine National Police (PNP) Naga are chosen. Moreover, according to the identified media partners and organizations, these barangays have the most recorded complaints in their respective media stations. These data are a strong indicator that the barangay citizens and the barangay officials from these identified barangays manifest problems in understanding the due process of law, which results in patronizing trials by publicity. Therefore it is only appropriate to use them to be the subject of the study. On the other hand, the researchers also explored the possibility of getting relevant information from media organizations that serve as the avenue for

barangay citizens who bypass due process and opt to get involved in trials by publicity. These media partners who are purposively chosen are RMN DWNX; Brigada News FM Bicol; Bossing FM Naga; Balitang Bicolandia; GNN TV 48; KM-FM, and Bombo Radyo.

The result of this study defines how these participants perceive trial by publicity, their level of awareness of the due process of law, and the perceived effects it brings to the judicial system of the barangays. However, the data is considered first-hand sources derived directly from the respondent's angles. This inquiry verifies the assumption that the participants have varying perspectives on trial by publicity. Similar to how social media influences political views among Filipinos, as noted by Patag (2018), the participants' perceptions are shaped by the content they consume, which can affect their understanding and attitudes toward legal processes. These perspectives have left an impact on their level of awareness about the due process of law. Moreover, the participants are found to contribute to the perceived effects of trial by publicity to the judicial system at the barangay level. Upon establishing the output that describes the extent of impact and the dimensions/components affected, a promotional and educational tool in the form of video, pamphlets, and posters on the due process of law shall be created to educate the participants on the importance of due process of law and fair trial even at the barangay level.

Objectives of the study. The study determines the perspectives on trial by the publicity of barangay citizens, their officials, and the local media practitioners and the perceived effects on the judicial system at the barangay level.

1. Determine the perspectives to trial by the publicity of barangay citizens, barangay officials, and media practitioners in terms of the following aspects: platform, accessibility, and judgment.
2. Determine the level of awareness of barangay citizens, barangay officials, and media practitioners about due process of law in terms of the following aspects: objective, procedure, and judgment.
3. Determine the significant difference in the perspectives on trial by publicity and awareness of due process of law of the respondents.
4. Determine the significant relationship between perspectives to trial by publicity and the level of awareness on the due process of law.

5. Determine the perceived effects or outcomes of the trial by publicity.
6. Develop material that will educate barangay citizens, officials, and media practitioners on the importance of due process of law and fair trial, even at the barangay level.

METHODS

This research is a quantitative study using the descriptive-evaluative method since the results of this study will assess the perspectives to trial by publicity among barangay citizens, barangay officials, and media practitioners. Likewise, this study employed a descriptive research method as it also aims to get the nature of an inevitable occurrence, in this case, the trial by publicity, as it prevails at the time of the study.

Population and Sample.

The researchers identified seven (7) media partners. The manner of selection is through purposive sampling. The seven (7) identified media partners are stations with a segment regarding the trial by publicity. The population is determined by their most valuable purposes in the research. Criteria in selecting the sample are: (1) Working at Radio (AM and FM) or TV Station and (2) Must have experience interviewing/reporting a complainant (Consumer-related, feud, and others).

The different media partners were: Media Partner #1 News and Public Affairs Anchor, RMN DWNX; Media Partner #2 News Writer and News Anchor, Brigada News FM Bicol; Media Partner #3 Anchor, Home Radio; Media Partner #4 News Anchor, Balitang Bicolandia; Media Partner #5 GNN TV, 48; Media Partner #5 News Anchor, KM-FM, and Media Partner #7 Manager, Bombo Radyo.

In identifying the barangay citizens and officials, the researchers utilized the data provided by the Media practitioners. This study included two hundred seventy (270) respondents – barangay residents and Abella, Lerma, and Triangulo officials. The manner of choosing the respondents was through Slovin's Formula. Table 1 shows the frequency distribution of the respondents. Ninety-five percent were barangay residents, and five percent were barangay officials.

Table 1.
Respondents' Profile

Barangay	Residents	Barangay officials	Total
Abella	87	5	92
Lerma	80	4	84
Triangulo	89	5	94
Total	256	14	270

Data Gathering Technique

The researchers employed a self-made questionnaire. Part I of the questionnaire aimed to determine the perspectives to trial by the publicity of the respondents along with the following areas: a) platform, b) accessibility, and c) judgment. Part II of the research tool aimed to quantitatively investigate the respondents' awareness of due process of law along with the following areas: a) objective, b) procedure, and c) judgment. Moreover, the Part III of the questionnaire enumerated the perceived effects of trial by publicity at the barangay level. It further sought other responses showing the perceived effects of trial by the publicity that were not given in the enumerated options. Lastly, this research wanted to determine whether there is a significant difference in the perspectives among the respondents about trial by publicity. The study uses a 4-point Likert scale: 4 is Very High Awareness (VHA), 3 is High Awareness (HA), 2 is Low Awareness (LA), and 1 is Very Low Awareness (VLA).

Statistical Treatment

For the data analysis, the researchers will gather, tabulate, tally, and interpret the gathered data using descriptive correlation statistics. The weighted mean will be used to assess the respondents' perspectives along with the following areas: a) platform, b) accessibility, and c) judgment. The same statistical tool will be employed to investigate the respondents' awareness of the due process of law. On the other, frequency and ranking will be employed in presenting the threats of trial by publicity at the barangay level. At the same time, ANOVA with Post Hoc Test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference in the perspectives among the respondents about trial by publicity. All data were computed using the PASW version to analyze the results further.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Trial by publicity is a phenomenon. Because of the instant justice that it provides people who have been desperately seeking it, this practice has taken the masses to choose its convenience without considering that such may have adverse effects on the judicial system at the barangay level. However, despite the popularity that this form of trial has attained, it is still essential to unravel how the citizens, the barangay officials, and the media practitioners – its component members, perceive trial by publicity, their level of awareness of the due process of law, and the perceived effects it brings to the judicial system at the barangay level. By determining the outputs that describe the extent of impact and the dimensions affected, an intervention on the due process of law shall be created to educate the participants on the importance of the due process of law and fair trial, even at the barangay level.

The first objective sought to determine the perspectives to trial by the publicity of barangay citizens, officials, and media practitioners regarding platform, accessibility, and judgment. The following data comprehensively presents the perspectives to trial by publicity according to the recurrence rate and is interpreted based on the weighted mean.

Perspectives to Trial by Publicity of Barangay Citizens, Barangay Officials, and Media Practitioners in Terms Of Platform, Accessibility, and Judgment

Broadcast media exercises incredible influence on the public. Being the venue of trial by publicity, people see it through varying lenses. It has become a means or opportunity for people to communicate their ideas, share information, or even expose problems to a much larger group of people. Its availability to the public is born out of the need to make lawyers more accessible to people in our country, where the judicial system is criticized for being inaccessible, especially to people experiencing poverty. Moreover, how issues are decided has given people who seek justice hope to be helped.

Presented in Table 2a are the perspectives to trial by publicity along with the platform. Barangay Citizens. The computed grand mean for barangay citizens is 2.64, statistically described as “High.” The top indicator of how this group of respondents perceives trial by publicity along with platform is “Hearing issues in

the barangay level on television as an evident form of media communication” (x=2.80).

The popularity of “Ipapa-Tulfo kita!”, a punching statement from one of the TV shows that cater to people’s random complaints, from the smallest to the most complex legal issues, has made its way into our national lexicon. People’s tendency to turn to media reveals how it has emerged as an alternative platform for seeking justice. As shown in the top indicator, the barangay citizens believe that media, such as the radio, television, and even social media, is a good platform where their issues, regardless of their gravity, will be heard and given attention. This kind of platform has done so in a free, swift, and convenient way because finding resolutions to problems can be done in just one or a few show episodes. Moreover, the masses find the language media practitioners use very relatable and easy to decipher. The barangay citizens perceive all these as good indicators of why trial by publicity a practical platform for their issues is encompassing, strong, immediate, and dangerous mechanism without recourse to the formal legal process” (x=2.70), shows that the barangay citizens are mindful that trial by publicity is a dangerous platform for seeking justice because it bypasses the formal legal process. Because of its nature, where faulty assumptions and unproven hunches are all over the place, the reputations of the involved persons are put at risk, and their lives and the future ahead of them. Moreover, trial by publicity is never an objective and cautious procedure, for its main concern is to immediately judge and provide an instantaneous remedy to any random issues aired to the media. Since there is no such thing as real instant justice, trial by publicity looms over the formal legal process because these media practitioners are not courts in the first place. However, even though there are proper agencies that can handle these issues, not to mention the knowledge of the citizens concerning the danger that this system may bring to the table, they are still lured to seek help from these media programs because, for them, these are their last bastion of hope and the closest thing to getting real justice in the country.

Table 2a.
Perspectives to Trial by Publicity Along with Platform

Statement Indicators	Barangay Citizens			Barangay Officials			Media		
	\bar{x}	AD	Rank	\bar{x}	AD	Rank	\bar{x}	AD	Rank
Immense availability of Lupon ng Barangay to give time and effort to settle disputes.	2.54	H	4	2.53	H	4	2	L	5
Valuing freedom of expression by barangay officials, together with the Lupon ng Barangay, in amicably settling interpersonal disputes in the community.	2.50	L	5	2.49	L	5	2.3	L	4
Utilization of radio in sharing two sides of issues as an encompassing, strong, immediate, and dangerous mechanism without recourse to the formal legal process.	2.70	H	2	2.78	H	3	2.5	L	2.5
Hearing issues at the barangay level on television as an evident form of media communication.	2.80	H	1	2.89	H	2	2.5	L	2.5
Social media serves as means to amicably resolve community/barangay disputes without resorting to the courts.	2.68	H	3	3.07	H	1	3.2	H	1
Grand Mean	2.64	H	2	2.75	H	1	2.50	L	3

The second indicator, “Utilization of radio in sharing two sides of issues as an. The third indicator is “Social media serving as means to amicably resolve community/barangay disputes without resorting to the courts” (\bar{x} =2.68) and is described as “high.” Barangay citizens understand that social media, one of the platforms where trial by publicity is done through YouTube channels, can be an excellent avenue to settle disagreements without bringing the issues to courts. The respondents perceive this form of trial as a more practical avenue where legal matters can be resolved since the parties involved get to avoid the need for expensive lawyers and court fees. It also gets to avoid them from attending years and years of court hearings wherein they are rarely even heard since lawyers often speak in a language they do not understand. Furthermore, the parties involved do not have to attend anything in the show. They can do it via phone patch or video call, making a trial by publicity a more attractive platform to the masses. All these perceived “advantages” speak volumes about the practicality of the platform for acquiring “justice.”

Mettra (2017) found out in his research that the barangay citizens highly perceive broadcast media, specifically radio and television, as a convenient platform where they can freely air their issues, sentiment, and problems on matters that concern their daily activities and expect immediate remedies from the hosts themselves. This claim is vastly supported by the study of Sierra (2022), where he revealed that 90% of the barangay constituents who were part of the respondents believed that the media has been serving as an effective platform where instant justice is served, even though this measure has taken the involved parties' lives open for public scrutiny. Furthermore, the study disclosed that the constituents are, in fact, cognizant of the idea that trial by publicity is a dangerous platform because of the possible negative consequences that it may cause; however, constituents still prefer to have their issues amicably settled through this platform because it prevents them from spending an enormous amount when resorting to courts.

Barangay Officials. The computed general weighted mean for barangay officials is 2.75, statistically described as "high" in frequency and determined to be the highest mean among the three (3) respondents. The top indicators as to how this group of respondents perceives trial by publicity along with platform are "Social media serving as means to amicably resolve community/barangay disputes without resorting to the courts" ($x=3.07$), "Hearing issues in the barangay level on television as an evident form of media communication" ($x=2.89$), and "Utilization of radio in sharing two sides of issues as an encompassing, strong, immediate, and dangerous mechanism without recourse to the formal legal process" ($x=2.78$).

It is the duty of the local government unit of barangays, through the Katarungang Pambarangay or Lupon Tagapamayapa, to provide for the resolution of disputes at the barangay level to achieve peace and harmony within the community and to provide an effective form of justice for community members. However, despite this emphasized the function of the barangay officials that is bestowed upon by the Philippine justice system, they perceive social and broadcast media, and not them, as the better effective avenue to amicably settle community disputes to avoid resorting to the courts. This top indicator is noticeably interrelated with the other two indicators, which also pertain to bypassing the barangay judicial system and choosing trial by publicity conducted in the media. This surprising result can be anchored on the belief that some people are more comfortable approaching

the media as they do not know the subject matters that barangay officials can settle. While there are barangay officials who are fulfilling their duty to maintain peace and order in each barangay, there are officials who are not giving proper assistance to people filing cases despite numerous instances of follow-ups. Furthermore, the lack of technical capacity of the Barangay Judicial System is also considered a palpable factor as to why residents disregard the existence of the system. Residents think bringing their legal issues to barangay officials who do not have expert knowledge in settling disputes wastes time; thus, they opt to have these issues settled in media through trial by publicity.

According to Rojo (2002), the absence of high-quality training and technical aptitude among barangay officials limits their ability to carry out their obligations in conducting operations under the Barangay Justice System. She further stated that barangay officials typically lack operational awareness of the codes, resulting in a limited functioning knowledge of the Barangay Justice System (BJS). In contrast to other nations in the region that practice alternative community justice, the Philippine BJS has very disjointed and intermittent training programs, which visibly affects the competence level of its implementers. Communities on Panay Island, for example, elect barangay captains at large with no consideration for specific educational attainment or technical abilities. Similarly, community members in the National Capital Region see a lack of awareness of the BJS program as one of the key operational issues, and they advocate for more and better training for both the barangay captain and Lupon members.

Media Practitioners. The general weighted mean for perspectives to trial by the publicity of media practitioners in terms of the platform is 2.50, which is statistically described as “low.” This is the lowest mean among the three (3) respondents.

The top indicator is “Social media serving as means to amicably resolve community/barangay disputes without resorting to the courts” ($x=3.2$) and is described as “high.” Media exercises a strong influence on the public. Because of its power to bring transparency to the system, it has become the fitting platform where people can bring their issues and resolve them amicably through the method used by these broadcast media shows. With programs designed to provide instant justice to whoever seeks it, these media shows have emerged as an alternative mechanism for seeking “justice,” thus preventing citizens from resorting to courts.

Meanwhile, the weighted mean for indicators “Utilization of radio in sharing two sides of issues as an encompassing, strong, immediate, and dangerous mechanism without recourse to the formal legal process” and “Hearing issues in the barangay level on television as an evident form of media communication” is both $x=2.50$ which is statistically described as “low.” The two indicators shared the same weighted mean results. In contemporary high-choice media environments, the issue of media trust and its impact on people’s media use has taken on new importance. That is why these media practitioners do not uphold the idea that utilizing radio, and even other forms of media, for trial by publicity is dangerous in seeking justice. These media practitioners adhere to the idea that trial by publicity is the new face of “Philippine Justice” because of their convenience and quick response to whoever asks for their help on varying issues. Moreover, the media views trial by publicity as an opportunity for ordinary people to be given the platform to be heard. Shows like Raffy Tulfo in Action on TV 5 and YouTube are designed not only as a form of media communication but as an avenue where poor Filipinos will not be left helpless and their rights will not be easily abused.

Niven and Kao (2020) in her article said that the popularity of shows in the broadcast media, including those in social media, whose content is trial by publicity has already transcended entertainment since people’s propensity to turn to these shows reveals that they are after the instant justice that this form of trial provides. She further stated that the broadcast media is not a dangerous platform but more of an alternative mechanism for seeking justice since it is done in an accessible way, avoids expensive lawyers and court fees, and the dynamics are easy to understand by everyone. All these advantages speak volumes about the country's access to justice or the lack thereof.

Presented in Table 2b is the perspectives on trial by publicity along with acceptability. Barangay Citizens. Among the respondents, barangay constituents’ grand mean is 2.64, described as ‘High.’ The indicator with the highest rank in terms of the Perspectives on Trial by Publicity Along with Accessibility is the difficulty of consulting their problem with the people who know them in their barangay than stating it online or in media with a computed weighted mean of 2.80, also “High.” This could indicate that people have the confidence to air out their sentiments to the public, hoping the wider community could sympathize and let

more people know the entire story rather than just letting the people they know in their community to learn about it and fear the story being altered from person to another. This could be related to Arcilla's (2019) claim about the incident when 'Tulfo in Action' catered to the concern of a student who claimed to be bullied by a teacher. This incident caused many students and the alliance for teachers to show sympathy to the complainant and the accused immediately. Incidents that more people can relate to seemed to result in that cycle of enticing more audiences to turn to media outlets for concerns rather than following the due process of law. Second among the indicators is the ease of contacting the media for fast service than going to trials in barangays with a computed weighted mean of 2.70, also described as "High."

Table 2b.
Perspectives on Trial by Publicity Along with Accessibility

Statement Indicators	Barangay Officials			Media			Barangay Citizens		
	\bar{x}	AD	Rank	\bar{x}	AD	Rank	\bar{x}	AD	Rank
Finding more accessibility in posting online and telling radio/television about the problems than discussing it with the barangay officials.	2.53	H	4	2	L	5	2.54	H	4
Finding ease in asking for help from media who do not require monetary involvement than seeking help from barangay officials.	2.49	L	5	2.3	L	4	2.50	L	5
Seeing convenience in contacting media for its fast service than going to trials in our barangays.	2.78	H	3	2.5	L	2.5	2.70	H	2
Finding difficulty in consulting people who know me concerning my problems than to stating it online or on media.	2.89	H	2	2.5	L	2.5	2.80	H	1
Achieving justice faster from media for their immediate response on issues aired.	3.07	H	1	3.2	H	1	2.68	H	3
Grand Mean	2.75	H	1	2.50	L	3	2.64	H	2

The response of barangay constituents indicates how accessible the media platforms are. This easy accessibility could correspond to the belief that these media outlets are after sensational content, as cited in Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (2011). This sensationalism is claimed to result in a lesser focus on objective journalism. These people also believe that the media have better access to the people involved, especially the accused and the agencies that are often alarmed and

pressured to respond. Perhaps that is why most individuals would choose barangay officials first. The indicator which ranked third among the barangay constituents is the belief that they can achieve justice faster in telling/opening their complaints to the media because this platform response immediately than to bring it in their barangay, with a computed weighted mean of 2.68 which is again, described as “High.” This may indicate that they have a firmer belief toward the trial by publicity in determining what needs to be done in their burdens. Despite Yadav’s (2022) claim about these audiences’ “targeted unproductive, leisure and entertainment proclivities,” people’s urge for justice to instantaneously be gotten seemed to be the driving force for them to still turn to the media.

Barangay Officials. The respondents with the highest grand mean of 2.70 are the barangay officials. The top indicator along accessibility in the Perspectives on Trial by Publicity is the faster achievement of justice in terms of telling/opening complaints to media because this platform responds immediately compared to bringing it in their barangay, with a computed weighted mean of 3.07. This could mean that these respondents would instead choose to resolve inevitable disagreements online or through trial by publicity since they get to be addressed by these media outlets immediately. Possibly because of their experiences working in the barangay, they witnessed how these capacities respond, counter, and bring justice to these issues. This result highly dangers the essence of due process at the barangay level. Second among the indicators is the difficulty of consulting their problem with the people who know them in their barangay than stating it online or in media, with a computed weighted mean of 2.89, also “High.” These officials deployed to work in the name of service probably understand that it is human nature to vent out to the more prominent public rather than be talked about only by those closest to them regarding location. Khoo (2010) stated that these practices of secrecy and lies to unsuspecting others cause this feeling of being a victim of bullying behaviors that many perpetrators often practice in most barangays. This is basically what most people think of when involved in disgraceful issues. The third indicator is the ease of contacting the media for fast service than going to trials in barangays with a computed weighted mean of 2.78, which is still described as “High.” It could indicate that barangay officials still believe in the due process they need to resolve certain concerns in their community and stand firm to the belief that

their office, which is the barangay hall, is always willing to entertain as part of their duty.

Media Practitioners. The media practitioners gained a computed grand mean of 2.50, described as “Low.” Same with the barangay officials, the top indicator along accessibility in the Perspectives on Trial by Publicity is the faster achievement of justice in terms of telling/opening complaints to media because this platform responds immediately compared to bringing it in their barangay, with a computed weighted mean of 3.2, described as “High.” Possibly because of their experiences working on media platforms, they witnessed how these capacities respond, counter, and bring justice to these issues. They also understand how a manifesto works. The indicators focused on the ease of contacting the media for fast service rather than going to trials in barangays and the difficulty of consulting their problem with the people who know them in their barangay rather than stating it online or in the media. Both ranked second with a computed weighted mean of 2.5, described as “Low.” These indicators could indicate a deficiency of experience compared to those who would usually try to seek help and advice either from the media or barangay officials.

Presented in Table 2c are the perspectives on trial by publicity and judgment. Barangay citizens. Among five statement indicators, the statement that “barangay officials play a vital role in dispensing barangay justice” received the highest weighted mean of 3.30. This can be interpreted with a “high” adjectival description. Other indicators such as “faulty assumptions and unproven guilty directly involve to trial by publicity degrade someone’s reputation but also their future” ($x = 3.23$) and “poverty is the main reason why people bypass the judicial system proceedings through trial by publicity” ($x = 3.14$) emerged as ranks 2 and 3 respectively as per the perspectives to trial by publicity along with judgment is concerned. Overall, barangay constituents have a weighted mean of 3.28, which is interpreted as “high.”

This indicates that constituents have seen the crucial responsibility of elected and appointed officers in ensuring justice in their locality. This highlights the importance of barangay officials in maintaining peace and order in their assigned areas. With their active involvement in promoting harmony as well as fairness and justice when problems arise, they are expected by the constituents to act accordingly, which will provide solutions to their existing problems. Barangay officials should promote the justice system and how it works and spread guidelines on how

household issues and barangay-related concerns can be given enough attention. The constituents should feel their presence in their barangays. Moreover, poverty is perceived as another concern as constituents cannot afford to undergo legal procedures; hence, going to a radio or TV station is more convenient for them.

Table 2c.
Perspectives on Trial by Publicity Along with Judgment

Statement Indicators	Barangay Constituents			Barangay Officials			Media		
	\tilde{x}	A D	Ra nk	\tilde{x}	A D	Ra nk	\tilde{x}	A D	Rank
The significant impact of trial by publicity on the judicial system at the barangay level.	2.98	H	5	2.98	H	5	2.20	L	5
Poverty is the main reason why people bypass the judicial system proceedings through trial by publicity.	3.14	H	3	3.37	H	2	3.00	H	3
Getting relevant information and immediate resolutions are reasons why people tend to come on shows or radio to talk about legal problems.	3.04	H	4	3.28	H	4	3.20	H	1.5
Barangay officials as vital element in dispensing barangay justice.	3.30	H	1	3.42	H	1	3.20	H	1.5
Degraded reputation, as well as a ruined future, are consequences of faulty assumptions and unproven guilt from trial by publicity.	3.23	H	2	3.35	H	3	3.00	H	4
Grand Mean	3.28	H	1	2.92	H	3	3.13	H	2

Trial by publicity, rampant and enduring as popularized by several national radio and TV programs, seemed detrimental to the justice system. It is simple to see why such a formula would harm any civilization. It is a case of trial by public opinion. Instant justice is unreliable, unconstitutional, and prone to abuse. It turns misery into a spectacle. It instills in the general public the belief that justice is served more quickly and reasonably outside of the legal system. The idea is that people's faith in the government and its ability to administer justice has diminished over time. The public's faith and confidence in our institutions have been undermined by corruption and impropriety by government officials, officers, and employees. Going to court or following legal procedures is no longer considered simple,

convenient, or economical. Also, this claim is supported by Chapter One Section 384 of the Local Government Code of the Philippines for Local Government Units - the Barangay that reiterates as the basic political unit; the Barangay serves 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.

Barangay Officials. The general weighted mean for barangay citizens on the perspectives to trial by publicity along judgment is 2.92, interpreted as “high.” For them, “barangay officials play a vital role in dispensing barangay justice” is the most critical concern in promoting justice in places where they have direct contact. It ranked first with a weighted mean of 3.42 and was interpreted as “high.” Other two indicators that emerged as ranked 2 and 3 are “poverty is the main reason why people bypass the judicial system proceedings through trial by publicity” ($x = 3.37$) and “faulty assumptions and unproven guilty directly involve to trial by publicity degrade someone’s reputation but also their future” ($x = 35$) both have “high” adjectival descriptions or interpretation.

Barangay officials know their vital responsibility to enforce justice in their barangays. They are also aware that once a constituent is involved in any situation such as this, trial by publicity can create a bad reputation for a person and their family, not just on the day of the trial but also in the future, most especially if issues are being raised are not resolved by the program. This phenomenon reflects a broader societal issue where historical mistrust in legal processes has led to a reliance on sensationalized media portrayals rather than faith in traditional justice systems (O’Connor 2020). As Barangay officials have perceived their roles and commitment to their constituents, the most significant job is encouraging people to trust their barangays in handling household-related problems and concerns. Despite these severe complaints, it is fair to conclude that the trial by publicity popularized by TV programs such as "Tulfo Court" cannot be definitively identified as the root of the problem; instead, it is a symptom of a more prominent, more deadly disease in society: a loss of trust in legal processes and government administration of justice. Understanding this historical context is crucial for barangay officials as they work to rebuild trust and promote effective conflict resolution within their communities.

Chapter 2 Section 388 – persons in authority of the Local Government Code of the Philippines reiterated the importance of government officials down to the LGUs and barangays. It states that for purposes of the Revised Penal Code, the Punong Barangay, Sangguniang Barangay members, and members of the Lupong Tagapamayapa in each Barangay shall be deemed as persons in authority in their jurisdictions, while other Barangay officials and members who may be designated by law or ordinance and charged with the maintenance of public order, protection, and security of life and property, or the maintenance of a desirable and balanced environment, and any Barangay member who comes to the aid of persons in authority, shall be deemed agents of persons in authority.

Media Practitioners. The computed mean for media is 3.13 and is statistically described as “high.” Wherein “getting relevant information and immediate resolutions are the reasons why people tend to come on show or radio talk about the legal problem” and “barangay officials play a vital role in dispensing barangay justice” both received a weighted mean of 3.20 with a “high” interpretation among the five statement indicators. This was followed by an indicator: “Poverty is the main reason why people bypass the judicial system proceedings through trial by publicity” ($x = 3.0$), which was interpreted as “high.”

Media practitioners perceived that their programs and services are the easiest way and initial recourse for people with problems that cannot be addressed and resolved correctly in their barangays. Also, they view the functions of barangay officials as an essential factor in attaining justice to perceived problems. The result also highlighted how poverty provokes people to bring their concerns to media outlets that are willing to cater to their needs. Barangay citizens are now dependent on media outlets' services, for it is free and assumed to respond immediately to their needs. These cases exist as the rest of the fans and the people widely accept this trial by publicity. On the other hand, this judgment can also benefit the media.

The result was supported by Dependency Theory by Lowrey (2004), as cited by Sastry (2019), that there is a vital link between the consumer's social group, the consumer, and the media. Dependency links are assumed to exist in individuals, the media, the social environment, and interpersonal connections between the media and people. Each other's desires or aspirations are dependent on the resources of another. Some people are politically motivated and reliant on the rewards they will

receive from the agency when it comes to trial by publicity. The same can be said for the media outlet.

Perspectives to trial by the publicity of barangay citizens, barangay officials, and media practitioners in terms of platform, accessibility, and judgment are presented in this discussion to explicate the overall implications of the statistical description in the production of an intervention that will aim to educate people on the due process of law and fair trial.

Table 2 shows the rating summary along with perspectives on trial by Publicity. As presented in table 2d, the three indicators along with perspectives to trial by publicity are perceived by the three respondents at almost the same frequency: Barangay Officials ($x=3.07$), Barangay Citizens ($x=2.98$), and Media Practitioners ($x=2.71$). All these are interpreted as “High.”

Table 2d.
Summary of Rating along with Perspectives on Trial by Publicity

Parameter	Barangay Officials			Media Practitioners			Barangay Citizens		
	\tilde{x}	AD	Rank	\tilde{x}	AD	Rank	\tilde{x}	AD	Rank
Platform	3.18	H	1	2.72	H	2	3.18	H	2
Accessibility	2.75	L	3	2.50	L	3	2.64	H	1
Judgment	3.28	H	2	2.92	H	1	3.13	H	3
Grand Mean	3.07	H	1	2.71	H	3	2.98	H	2

Barangay officials ranked first in how they perceived the trial by publicity regarding the given aspects. Barangay officials understand that it is their responsibility to provide citizens with a peaceful and orderly community by providing them with an effective form of justice in resolving disputes among the community members. However, as they understand their role, they also recognize their weakness in handling community disputes, which resorts to bringing these issues to the media, which now serves as the platform for people who seek justice. Regarding accessibility, barangay officials see that the citizens would instead choose to resolve inevitable disagreements online or through trial by publicity since they get to be addressed by these media outlets instantly. They also recognized that community leaders must encourage people to trust them and their judgment when handling household-related problems and concerns.

Barangay citizens ranked second in how they perceive these aspects of trial by publicity. The constituents have labeled media, through its trial by publicity, as the perfect platform to seek resolutions to any disputes because of the convenience, quickness, and ease it provides to whoever is involved in the process. Moreover, they gained more confidence in bringing their sentiments out to the public, hoping that a wider audience could commiserate and eventually gain support from these spectators.

Media practitioners ranked third. As the ones employing trial by publicity using welcoming people who see themselves as hopeless for justice, they see themselves not only as entertainment but also as a mechanism that allows people to be heard and be given instant justice, which they think these citizens deserve. They feel like they are the only hope for these “victims” to be given the justice they deserve.

All these results imply danger to the judicial process at the barangay level. The negligence these groups of people have intentionally chosen to do palpably threatens people’s right to due process of law and fair trial.

Quianzon (2019) emphasized how the Philippine Constitution protects every Filipino citizen's right to due process; however, people's fascination with TV and radio programs that bypass what the constitution refers to as "due process" causes people to see the negative effects of trial by publicity can have on someone's life. Greer and McLaughlin (2011) back it up. According to them, a media trial is a dynamic process in which people are exposed to public opinion and condemned without being heard, and being called out on a national program deprives a person of this constitutional right and puts them under pressure to agree to the conditions on the spot. Newburn and Peay (2012) backed up these findings by claiming that media use in parallel areas of justice impacts the judiciary. Furthermore, because it defies the constitution, it expects to endanger the country's legal system.

Level of Awareness of the Barangay Citizens, Barangay Officials, and Media Practitioners on the Due Process of Law in Terms Of Objective, Procedure, and Judgment

The second objective sought to determine the level of awareness of the barangay citizens, officials, and media practitioners on the due process of law in

terms of Objective, Procedure, and Judgment. The following data is a comprehensive presentation of the respondents' awareness of due process of law and were interpreted based on weighted mean.

Table 3a presents the results of the data gathered along the level of awareness of the barangay citizens, officials, and media practitioners on the due process of law in terms of Objective. It shows the weighted mean and its corresponding verbal interpretation.

Table 3a.
Awareness of Due Process Along with Objectives

Statement Indicators	Barangay Officials			Media			Barangay Constituents		
	\bar{x}	AD	Rank	\bar{x}	AD	Rank	\bar{x}	AD	Rank
Awareness of my rights.	3.93	VH	2	2.2	L	5	3.54	VH	1
Awareness of other people's right to be heard.	4.00	VH	1	3.00	H	3.5	3.43	H	2
Awareness of the barangay's existing formal mediation or alternative dispute resolution process.	3.72	VH	3	3.20	H	1.5	3.37	H	4
Awareness of resolving issues through the informal justice system or trial by publicity and its effects on my rights of privacy	3.52	VH	5	3.20	H	1.5	3.21	H	5
Awareness of resolving minor issues with the upon ng barangay	3.60	VH	4	3.00	H	3.5	3.41	H	3
Grand Mean	3.75	VH	1	2.92	H	3	3.39	H	2

Barangay Citizens. Given the five (5) indicators, the statement about Awareness of their Rights ranked first with a weighted mean of 3.54, interpreted as Very High. Last, however, is the statement about *Awareness of the Effect of Trial by Publicity on the Rights of Privacy* with a weighted mean of 3.21, interpreted as High. The over-all level of awareness about the due process of law along objective by the barangay constituents is High, with a weighted mean of 3.39.

It can be inferred from the data that the barangay constituents are well acquainted with their rights. In the study context, they know they can express and raise their complaints as it is a personal right given to everyone. The objective of the trial by publicity coincides with the barangay constituents' mindset that they have the right to be accommodated in a setting where their complaints will be heard and solutions will be given. However, the results also show that they have the

slightest awareness of the possible consequences of Trial by Publicity in their Privacy Rights. This result indicates that people disregard the possible detrimental effect of Trial by Publicity. Publicity sounds good to some people because they tend to be popular. Using “Raffy Tulfo in Action” as a reference, many people from the show became famous after they aired their complaints. However, this is not always good; some became a face for “memes,” and some received hurtful comments.

Barangay Officials. Given the five (5) indicators, the statement about *Awareness of the right to be heard* ranked first with a weighted mean of 4.00, interpreted as *Very High*. On the other hand, the statement about *Awareness of the Effect of Trial by Publicity on the Rights of Privacy* ranked last with a weighted mean of 3.52, interpreted as *Very High*. The overall level of awareness about the due process of law, along with the objective of the barangay officials, is *Very High*, with a weighted mean of 3.75.

Based on the computed data, the barangay authorities are properly informed about their right to be heard. The outcome demonstrates the barangay authorities' recognition of trial by publicity as a legitimate decision or action. This could indicate that public officials believe it is linked to their right to be heard when it comes to the goal of trial by publicity. However, the evidence suggests that barangay officials have the slightest awareness of the impact of trial by publicity on their privacy rights. It is reasonable to assume that they are more concerned with their right to be heard than maintaining their right to privacy. This is because, as public personalities, they have previously revealed personal information about themselves during elections and other political events. As a result of this situation, the right to privacy may no longer be a top priority for barangay officials.

Media Practitioners. Given the five (5) indicators, the statement about *Awareness of Dispute Resolution at the Barangay level* and *Awareness of the Effect of Trial by Publicity in the Rights of Privacy* ranked first with a weighted mean of 3.2, interpreted as *High*. The statement about awareness of their personal rights is ranked last; however, with a weighted mean of 2.2, it is interpreted as *low awareness*. The overall level of awareness about the due process of law by the media practitioners is *High*, with a weighted mean of 2.92.

The data revealed that the media practitioners have an in-depth understanding of the Dispute Resolution at Barangay Level and the possible effects of Trial by

Publicity on the Rights of Privacy. This can be attributed to their firsthand experiences concerning Trial by Publicity. This set of respondents has relevant experience dealing with people who have raised and shared their complaints over a media station. Also, media practitioners are highly aware of the presence of Dispute Resolution at the Barangay Level. This high awareness can be accredited to their work ethics. One of the respondents highlighted that before they accommodate a complainant over their media station, the first question is whether the complainant has already consulted the concerned office or department at their Barangay. This process by the media practitioners and other media staff implied that they highly respect Dispute Resolution at the Barangay Level.

On the other hand, media practitioners show Low Awareness of their *Rights*. It appears that the media practitioners have the slightest appreciation for using Trial by Publicity to justify the complainant's right. This lack of awareness may be influenced by external pressures, such as advertising and public relations, which can shape their understanding of ethical responsibilities in reporting (Colistra 2012). The significant experience and knowledge of the media practitioners in their field of profession has brought a realization that our rights should be evaluated and acted upon after properly considering its possible impacts. Every right has its corresponding responsibility.

Rosales-Viray and Versoza (2018) cited Balkin in enumerating the three fundamental functions of media in the government, namely: 1) mass media provides the people with information on the nature and dynamics of government; 2) mass media influences political decisions and dynamism; 3) it serves as a watchdog in making public officials accountable in their actions and decisions. Ray and Dutta (2015) emphasized that since newspapers, radio, and television are disseminating information and determining the topics people are interested in, certain crimes receive extensive media publicity, posing difficulty to the parties in the legal procedures. Benter and Cawi (2021) found that the members of the barangay justice were only moderately responsive among respondents. Moreover, in terms of referral of cases, there is still a need for improvement in the performance of roles and responsibilities on the part of the "lupon and pangkat."

The results of the data collected on the level of awareness of barangay citizens, barangay officials, and media practitioners on the due process of law in

terms of Procedure are presented in table 3B. It displays the weighted mean as well as its descriptive meaning.

Barangay Citizens. Given the five (5) indicators, the statement about *Awareness of the Timetable in settling Grievances in their Barangay* ranked first with a weighted mean of 3.33, interpreted as *High*. On the other hand, the statement about *Awareness of the Person to Communicate in Filing Cases In Lupon ng Barangay* and *Awareness of the cases that are actionable within the power of the Lupon ng Barangay* ranked last with a weighted mean of 3.23, interpreted as *High*. The overall level of awareness about the due process of law and procedure by the barangay citizens is *High*, with a weighted mean of 3.26.

Table 3b.
Procedures Awareness of Due Process Along with Procedures

Statement Indicators	Barangay Officials			Media			Barangay Constituents		
	\bar{x}	AD	Rank	\bar{x}	AD	Rank	\bar{x}	AD	Rank
Awareness of the cases/issues that are actionable and within the power of the lupon ng barangay.	3.50	H	3.5	4.00	VH	1.5	3.23	H	4.5
Be aware of the documents needed when filing complaints in the lupon ng barangay.	3.57	VH	2	4.00	VH	1.5	3.27	H	3
Awareness of whom to communicate or to approach in filing cases in the lupon ng barangay.	3.50	H	3.5	3.80	VH	3.5	3.23	H	4.5
Awareness of the timetable (from filing, hearing, and final resolution) when settling issues, grievances, and problem files in the lupon ng barangay.	3.43	H	5	3.80	VH	3.5	3.33	H	1
Awareness of the lupon ng barangay's composition and roles and responsibilities.	3.58	VH	1	3.60	VH	5	3.28	H	2
Grand Mean	3.51	VH	2	3.84	VH	1	3.26	H	3

Based on the result, barangay constituents know and understand the timetable for settling grievances. As barangay constituents, they might have already gained the necessary information and experience to resolve the complaints. It can be assumed that residents have tried to raise their concerns and asked about the procedures and other processes related to solving the complaints. The high awareness in this area reveals that barangay constituents have tried to solve their

complaints at the barangay level; however, the level of their satisfaction with how the lupon ng barangay have responded and have followed the timetable is not reflected in this result. Though the barangay constituents have a high awareness of the timetable, the procedure for settling complaints at the barangay level does not seem very appealing. The data also revealed that while barangay constituents know the timetable, they barely know whom to communicate or approach to raise and solve their problems. Aside from that, they have also shown little awareness of the issues or complaints that are actionable and can be resolved at the barangay level. With a few barangay officials, residents might not know who is in charge of entertaining their grievances. In some situations where barangay officials are out with meetings and other related tasks, no one might be left in the office to give immediate advice and action. Also, with the limitation on the composition of the lupon ng barangay, some complaints can no longer be acted on their level. Moreover, these limitations and scope do not seem to have been well explained to the barangay constituents. These can be significant reasons why barangay constituents choose to solve their complaints over media stations or through trial by publicity.

Barangay Officials. Given the five (5) indicators, the statement about *Awareness of the Composition and Responsibilities of the Lupon ng Barangay* ranked first with a weighted mean of 3.58, interpreted as *Very High*. On the other hand, the statement about *Awareness of the Timetable in settling Grievances in their Barangay* ranked last with a weighted mean of 3.43, interpreted as *High*. The overall level of awareness about the due process of law along procedure by the barangay officials is *Very High*, with a weighted mean of 3.51.

The result shows that barangay officials have shown considerable awareness of the composition of the lupon ng barangay and their roles and responsibilities. This is expected since the barangay officials are also members of the lupon ng barangay. As leaders, they know and even have experience settling complaints as they are members of the composition of the lupon ng barangay. As barangay officials, they know they are responsible for accepting, entertaining, and giving legal resolution to any barangay citizen with a complaint. They act as a mediator and can even decide on the appropriate action between and among the people involved in a complaint. However, the barangay officials have the slightest awareness regarding the timetable for settling grievances on the barangay level.

This result indicates that though they know the role and responsibility of the lupon ng barangay, they still cannot directly give an immediate response based on the expected timetable for a complaint to be settled. This can imply that barangay constituents choose to settle their complaints over media stations because the lupon ng barangay cannot even give them the expected days before a complaint is resolved.

Media Practitioners. Given the five (5) indicators, the statement about *Awareness of the cases that are actionable within the power of the Lupon ng Barangay* and *Awareness of the Documents to be submitted in filing a Complaint in the Barangay Level* ranked first with a weighted mean of 4 interpreted as *Very High*. On the other hand, the statement about *Awareness of the Composition and Responsibilities of the Lupon ng Barangay* ranked last with a weighted mean of 3.60, interpreted as *Very High*. The overall level of awareness about the due process of law and procedure by the media practitioners is *Very High*, with a weighted mean of 3.84.

The data revealed that the media practitioners know the cases that can be settled within the power of the Lupon ng Barangay. Contrary to the common impression that media practitioners entertain complaints over the media because they expect a high rating, media practitioners, on the other hand, are very careful and hesitant in taking complaints over media unless the complainants have already filed the complaint at their barangay level. In this regard, they also select the complaints to be entertained and aired in the media. One media practitioner respondent highlighted that they also follow a particular procedure before taking a complaint to the media; this includes questioning the complainant if he or she has already filed the complaint on the barangay level. They even advise the complainant to file and resolve the problem in their barangay. This situation revealed that the media practitioners respect the Lupon ng Barangay and its jurisdiction on complaints that can be settled within their power. However, it can be drawn from the data that the media practitioners are unfamiliar with the composition of the Lupon ng and Barangay and their respective roles and responsibilities. This can be attributed to the fact that they are less related to the barangay officials, especially the Lupon ng Barangay.

concerns of both parties could not be settled at the barangay level	3.57	VH	2	3.6	VH	1.5	3.27	H	1
Awareness of the lupon ng barangay's authority to give fines and sanctions to the unsuccessful party.	3.25	H	4	3.2	H	3.5	3.04	H	4
Awareness that the successful party may receive immediate payment from the unsuccessful party based on judgment and not require further action.	3.13	H	5	2.6	H	5	3.02	H	5
Grand Mean	3.39	H	1	3.24	H	2	3.15	H	3

Barangay Officials. Given the five (5) indicators, the statement about “Awareness that no freeman will be seized, dispossessed of his property, or harmed except by the law of the land” ranked first with a weighted mean of 3.58, interpreted as very high. On the other hand, the statement about “Awareness that the successful party may receive immediate payment from the unsuccessful party based on judgment and not require further action” ranked last with a weighted mean of 3.13, interpreted as High. The overall level of awareness about trial by publicity and judgment by the barangay officials is High, with a weighted mean of 3.39.

The findings highlight the need for targeted educational initiatives and information campaigns to enhance participants' awareness and understanding of trial by publicity and the role of barangay officials. By addressing areas of lower awareness and reinforcing existing knowledge, individuals can better navigate the legal processes involved and make informed decisions regarding their disputes.

Media Practitioners. Again, with the five (5) indicators given, two (2) equally ranked first. The statement “Awareness that no freeman will be seized, dispossessed of his property, or harmed except by the law of the land” ranked first with a weighted mean of 1.5; likewise, the statement “Awareness of the lupon ng barangay's right to pass on the cases to the higher court officials if the issues and concerns of both parties could not be settled in barangay level” also ranked first with a similar weighted mean of 1.5 both interpreted as very high. On the other hand, the statement “Awareness that the successful party may receive immediate payment from the unsuccessful party based on judgment and not require further action” ranked last with a weighted mean of 2.6 and was interpreted as Low. This

is very true because payment of indemnification can only be received by the successful party if the unsuccessful party is willing and able or is ordered by the proper court with finality.

Trial by publicity or through media is the fastest, cheapest way/avenue wherein the aggrieved party can go. Still, media practitioners respect the inherent power of the lupon to initially accept, evaluate, mediate, or settle, if possible, any conflict arising in the community, not taking for granted the party's constitutional right; that is why it ranked first. However, media practitioners know that the lupon has all the powers and rights to *elevate* cases that cannot be resolved at the barangay level to higher courts.

Table 3d shows the summary rating along with the due process. Table 3d shows that the three (3) indicators (Objectives, Procedures, and Judgment) along with Awareness of Due Process are perceived by barangay residents and barangay officials at almost the same frequency: Barangay residents ($\bar{x}=3.27$) and barangay officials ($\bar{x}=3.55$) and interpreted as High and Very High respectively. In contrast, for the Media Practitioners ($\bar{x}=2.36$), it was interpreted as Low.

Table 3d.
Summary of Rating Along with Due Process

Parameter	Barangay Officials			Media			Barangay Constituents		
	\bar{x}	AD	Rank	\bar{x}	AD	Rank	\bar{x}	AD	Rank
Objectives	3.75	VH	1	2.92	H	3	3.39	H	1
Procedures	3.51	VH	2	3.84	VH	1	3.26	H	2
Judgment	3.39	H	3	3.24	H	2	3.15	H	3
Grand Mean	3.55	VH	1	2.36	L	3	3.27	H	2

The barangay officials received the highest rating with a mean of 3.75, indicating a very high perception of trial by publicity's objectives. They ranked first in this category. The media obtained a mean rating of 2.92, indicating a high perception, and ranked third. The barangay constituents had a mean rating of 3.39, which also reflects a high perception, and ranked second.

The media received the highest rating with a mean of 3.84, signifying a very high perception of the procedures involved in the trial by publicity. They ranked first in this category. The barangay officials obtained a mean rating of 3.51, indicating a very high perception, and ranked second. The barangay constituents had a mean rating of 3.26, reflecting a high perception, and ranked third.

The barangay officials received the highest rating with a mean of 3.39, signifying a high perception of the judgment rendered through trial by publicity. They ranked first in this category. The media obtained a mean rating of 3.24, indicating a high perception, and ranked second. The barangay constituents had a mean rating of 3.15, reflecting a high perception, and ranked third.

Based on the grand mean, which combines the ratings across all categories, the barangay officials obtained the highest rating with a mean of 3.55, signifying a very high perception of trial by publicity overall. They ranked first in this composite measure. The media had the lowest grand mean with a rating of 2.36, indicating a low perception overall, and ranked third. The barangay constituents had a grand mean rating of 3.27, reflecting a high perception, and ranked second.

The high ratings obtained by barangay officials across all categories suggest that they have a favorable perception of trial by publicity. This implies that they may be more inclined to support and utilize media platforms as alternative avenues for resolving disputes and seeking justice. The media group's high ratings for objectives and procedures indicate that they have a positive perception of trial by publicity. This suggests that they view themselves as effective in achieving the goals of the process and implementing appropriate procedures. However, their lower rating for judgment indicates that there may be room for improvement in ensuring fair and objective judgment in trial by publicity. The barangay constituents also hold a positive perception of trial by publicity, as reflected in their high ratings across all categories. This suggests that they see media platforms as a practical and accessible means for addressing their issues and seeking justice.

Overall, the findings imply that trial by publicity, particularly through media platforms, is perceived positively by barangay officials and constituents. This highlights the potential of media as an alternative avenue for dispute resolution and justice-seeking in the barangay context. However, it also underscores the need for careful consideration of due process, ensuring fair judgment, and addressing any potential negative consequences associated with trial by publicity.

The impact of media on trial proceedings can have severe consequences for individuals, as they are often declared guilty by the media even before their guilt is proven in a court of law. The media's pre-judgment and portrayal can tarnish reputations, destroy careers, and subject individuals to societal scrutiny, even if they

are later found not guilty. This phenomenon is compounded by the logic of social media, which prioritizes engagement and sensationalism over accuracy, often amplifying narratives that can mislead the public (van Dijck & Poell 2013). The trial by publicity also raises concerns about the subconscious or conscious influence of media hype on judges, leading to potential bias or pressure in their decision-making. This compromises the impartiality expected from judges and can degrade the reputations of other involved parties, such as the police.

While acknowledging that media can play a role in exposing injustices and holding the powerful accountable, the text argues that there are vulnerabilities and risks associated with trial by media. The media's claim of representing society's views is questioned, as it can shape perceptions and influence the outcome of cases.

Significant Difference in the Perspectives to Trial by Publicity and Awareness to Due Process of Law of the Respondents

Despite media coverage, it is essential for juries to maintain impartiality when processing cases. Parties may also find themselves tied to journalists and the media when providing information on specific cases. The media's coverage of trials can impact the behavior of jurors and witnesses, underscoring the importance of understanding perspectives on trial by publicity and its aspects, such as platform, accessibility, and judgment.

The concept of due process of law is crucial in safeguarding individuals from government abuse, starting from the barangay level. It includes procedural standards that ensure proper order proceedings, protect people's liberty, and uphold rules and regulations without infringing on their rights. The principle of due process guarantees that no person should be deprived of life, liberty, or property without a fair legal process. Therefore, awareness of due process and its objectives, procedures, and judgment is significant for individuals, including barangay officials, residents, and media practitioners.

Emphasizing the importance of the presumption of innocence until proven guilty, the discussion highlights how calling out individuals on national programs can deprive them of their constitutional rights and subject them to pressure. It acknowledges the need for individuals to be informed and can be heard when brought to trial.

The research aims to explore and determine any significant differences in perspectives on trial by publicity and awareness of due process of law among the respondents. This research is valuable in shedding light on the perceptions and understanding of these concepts among individuals involved in the judicial system.

Table 4 shows that since the Paired two samples for means $P(T \leq t)$ two tail is $2.34887E-20$ less than $.05$ alpha probability margin of error and or the t-statistic 10.04 is more significant than 1.97 Critical value we reject the null hypothesis, and so at the 95% level of confidence we conclude that the difference between the Perspectives on Trial by Publicity and Level of Awareness on Due Process of Law of the Respondents is statistically significant.

The sample provides strong enough evidence to conclude that the two-population means differ. This means that the constituents, barangay officials, and media practitioners have different perspectives on Trial by Publicity and Level of Awareness on Due Process of Law.

Overall, this indicates that the respondents have different sympathies or levels of awareness on trial by publicity and due process of law regarding its aspects. That is why some constituents prefer trial by publicity to undergoing due process of law. In based from the result, there is a need for the barangay citizens to heighten their perspectives on trial through publicity and a level of awareness of the due process of law.

Table 4.

Summary Table for the Significant Difference between the Perspectives on Trial by Publicity and Level of Awareness on Due Process of Law of the Respondents

	<i>Awareness</i>	<i>Perspectives</i>
Mean	3.314074074	3.00617284
Variance	0.192506678	0.23882173
Observations	270	270
Pearson Correlation	0.413806816	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	269	
t Stat	10.04117259	
$P(T \leq t)$ one-tail	$1.17443E-20$	
t Critical one-tail	1.650537873	
$P(T \leq t)$ two-tail	$2.34887E-20$	
t Critical two-tail	1.968821974	

The research study covers the filed cases in the chosen barangays that observe the participation of broadcast media. In contrast, other studies focus on media participation in publicizing cases that result in unfair trials. The present study caters to the barangay level to know their perspectives and provide awareness to the respondents of the nature of the trial by publicity with the involvement of media as mass communication and the importance of the due process of law among the constituents, barangay officials, and media practitioners. Therefore, we conclude that there is a substantial difference among respondents' perspectives on trial by publicity and awareness of due process of law.

These data are a strong indicator that the constituents, barangay officials from the identified barangays, and the media practitioners had substantial differences in understanding perspectives on trial by publicity and awareness of the due process of law, which could result from patronizing trial by publicity. That is why, with the indicators of the overall results based on the table, the researchers need to develop material that will educate barangay citizens, officials, and media practitioners on the importance of due process of law and fair trial, even at the barangay level.

Significant Relationship between Perspectives to Trial by Publicity and the Level of Awareness on the Due Process of Law

The establishment of the Barangay Justice System (BJS) in 1978 was a response to the need for improved access to justice and the amicable settlement of family and community disputes. This initiative aimed to address the challenges faced by individuals in accessing justice at the barangay level.

The level of awareness of constituents in the community or barangay regarding the due process of law reflects their consistent commitment to securing their safety, security, and access to justice, even within the barangay setting. This awareness signifies a desire among people to have a say in decisions that affect their lives rather than having decisions imposed upon them. It also aligns with the growing recognition of the importance of ensuring safety, security, and access to justice for all individuals.

Table 5 presents the significant relationship correlation level between platform (perception) and objectives (awareness).

Table 5.
Significant Relationship Correlation Level between Platform (Perception)
and Objectives (Awareness)

Participants	Mean	SD	Covariance	<i>r_s</i>	T-critical Value
Platform	3.281	3.439	0.01328	0.0522	Although technically a positive correlation, the relationship between the variables is weak
Objectives	3.404	4.142			
Accessibility	2.575	6.093	-0.04642	-0.06176	Although technically a negative correlation, the relationship between the variables is only weak
Procedure	2.772	6.908			
Judgment (Perception)	3.207	4.147	-0.008434	-0.03289	Although technically a negative correlation, the relationship between the variables is only weak.
Judgment (Awareness)	3.281	3.463			
Level of Perception	3.021	3.247	-0.006158	-0.02778	Although technically a negative correlation, the relationship between the variables is only weak
Level of Awareness	3.152	3.822			

**Significant at 0.05*

The analysis shows the correlation levels between platform perception and objectives awareness. The mean values indicate the average scores for each variable, while the standard deviation (SD) indicates the dispersion of responses around the mean. The covariance reflects the relationship between the variables, and the t-critical value determines the significance of the correlation.

The correlation between platform perception and objectives awareness is weak (0.0522), although it is technically positive. This suggests that some association exists between how participants perceive the platform and their awareness of the objectives, but the relationship is not strong. Similarly, the correlation between accessibility and objectives awareness is weak (-0.06176), indicating a slight negative association.

The correlation between procedure and objectives awareness is also weak (0.03289), and although technically harmful, the relationship is not substantial. Furthermore, the correlation between judgment perception and objectives

awareness is weak (-0.02778), indicating a minor negative association. The level of perception also exhibits a weak negative correlation (-0.02778), implying a slight relationship with objectives awareness.

The weak correlation between platform perception and objectives awareness suggests that participants' perceptions of the platform may not strongly influence their awareness of the objectives. Other factors or sources of information may play a more significant role in shaping their understanding. The weak negative correlation between accessibility and objectives awareness indicates that as accessibility increases, participants' awareness of the objectives may slightly decrease. This suggests that efforts should be made to ensure that objectives are effectively communicated and easily accessible to participants. The weak correlation between procedure and objectives awareness suggests that the procedure itself may have a limited impact on participants' awareness of the objectives. This implies the need for clear and concise communication of objectives through alternative means or reinforcing the objectives throughout the process. The weak negative correlation between judgment perception and objectives awareness indicates that participants' perception of judgment may have a minor influence on their awareness of the objectives. This highlights the importance of clearly communicating the objectives to ensure that participants understand the purpose of the process. The weak negative correlation between the level of perception and objectives awareness suggests that increasing participants' level of perception may slightly decrease their awareness of the objectives. This implies the need for strategies to effectively communicate the objectives and maintain participants' understanding throughout the process. These findings emphasize the importance of clear and effective communication to ensure participants' awareness of the objectives. Efforts should be made to address any gaps in understanding and provide accessible information to enhance participants' comprehension of the objectives throughout the process.

The researchers can incorporate some additional factors gathered from the profile by identifying the Academic Background and Socio-Moral Background of every respondent relative to their Judgment: The respondents only described the extent of responsiveness of the barangay justice system on the settlement of disputes, a clear indication that the respondents observe that members of the barangay justice are trying their very best in the discharge of their mandated powers

and functions to fully serve the interest of their constituents relatively with the settlement of disputes serving as controversies affecting rights and interests of both the adversarial parties.

Perceived Outcomes of Trial by Publicity

Media is considered a fundamental pillar of democracy due to its influential role in shaping public opinion and changing people's perspectives on various events. The media has been instrumental in bringing attention to accused individuals, which can be seen as a positive trend. Media freedom is essential as it ensures that people are well-informed about public matters, including political, social, economic, and cultural aspects, allowing them to form well-rounded opinions. While a trial is a process that should be conducted by the courts, the involvement of media in trial proceedings can be seen as an unwarranted interference in the justice delivery process. This phenomenon of trial by publicity, even at the barangay level, has observable effects or outcomes, as evident from the experiences shared by the constituents who participated in this study. These experiences shed light on the significance of the situation at the barangay level and the impact of media on the issues relevant to the respondents. For instance, Bongbong Marcos' (2022) recent refusal to participate in various presidential interviews reflects a strategic choice to control his narrative through selective media engagement rather than facing rigorous scrutiny from traditional journalists. This approach not only limits public discourse but also exemplifies how candidates may prefer to engage with media outlets that align with their image, thereby bypassing critical discussions that voters need to make informed decisions. Such actions highlight the complexities of media influence in political contexts and raise questions about accountability and transparency in governance.

Table 6 presents the perceived effects or outcomes of the trial by publicity by the barangay citizens, officials, and media practitioners. Relative to the high percentage result of the perspectives on the Trial by Publicity along with Platform, Accessibility, and Judgment, and the Level of Awareness along with the Objectives, Procedures, and Judgement, the respondents also have a broader view on the possible impacts of trial by publicity, according to the study of Benter 2020 about the assessment of the Barangay Justice System the idea of strengthening the

traditional ways of settling disputes at the barangay level, as an off-shoot and alternative mechanism to the continuing congestion of cases filed in the regular courts of the Philippines.

Table 6.
Perceived Outcomes of Trial by Publicity

Statement- Indicators	Frequency	%	Rank
Expeditious resolution of complaints or issues.	155	57	1
Intrusion on one's privacy.	138	51	3
Defamation of one's reputation and dignity.	131	49	4
Embarrassment of the concerned parties.	152	56	2
Bias and prejudices due to selective exposure.	112	41	5
The inappropriate use of radio programs damages one's reputation and credibility.	70	26	8.5
Negative public opinions about the concerned parties were expressed on the part of both the complainant and respondents.	93	34	7
Most convenient and accessible platform to settle grievances or issues.	75	28	10
Friendly, inexpensive, and speedy forum for the settlement of disputes.	70	26	8.5
Amicably settle all disputes between parties residing in the same city or municipality in the jurisdiction.	61	23	11
Amicably settling interpersonal disputes in a community without recourse to the formal legal process in the Barangay Justice System.	97	36	6

Given the eleven (11) indicators, the statement about *Expeditious resolution of complaints or issues* ranked first with a 57 percent rate as they believed that when trial by publicity happens, there is an urgency to respond to that specific concern or issue compared to the common complain happened between the two parties. The respondents shared that immediate response to issues would mean immediate justice, even at the barangay level. More than half of the respondents believe in this idea as it makes them more hopeful that through this process of law, the justice that they are aiming for could be at their side in the shorter time possible, notwithstanding the view of the urgency of response when trial by publicity, some of the respondents take the consideration the possibility that the reputation of both parties could be at risk. The respondents agree that they are optimistic about the process of law, with the relevant action provided to the complainant or victim in the

shortest period and with less financial concern at stake just to clear the issues. The statement indicator that goes like *Embarrassment of the Concerned parties* ranked second with a rate of 56. The respondents believe that when the issues of the two parties happened to trial in public, embarrassment for both parties would be inevitable. Some believe it is better to deal with the issues only between the concerned parties to lessen the number of people who would know their problem. To them, they are more concerned with solving their problem over flaunting themselves in public as a mechanism of rural peace-building tool. Based on the International Journal of Arts, Sciences, and Education 2021, the Katarungan Pambarangay (BJS) is a mechanism of rural peace-building tool in a community. The creation of the Barangay Justice System aimed to alleviate the burden on the courts by addressing the large number of cases filed before them. Additionally, it serves as a longstanding practice of resolving conflicts among family and barangay members in a peaceful manner without relying on the resources of the judicial system.

Dealing with the most issues and concerns in life that come to the point of giving someone the liability to be accused or charged with a crime, what the other party most wanted to happen is to deal with it in the fastest time possible and find a solution out of these grievances. There are many ways to come up with a solution, one of which is to trial by publicity. Some people believe that this must be heard in public for expeditious resolution of complaints or issues. For most reasons, the involved individuals would help to find a solution to dismiss the case so that they could clear out their names, and for some who are not involved in the case but wanted to help, it would also bring help to the faster resolution of the problem. However, some would consider the embarrassment they would suffer if their issues and concerns were heard in public. Perhaps, these individuals would prefer to settle their complaints on the judicial system at the barangay level. There are respondents whose opinion shared emphasized settling disputes with the help of those personalities in the available media practitioners who encourage them to practice their freedom of expression and let due process of law be given to them immediately so that their fear of disregarding the issues even in the barangay level will be answered through the help of the media yet there were respondents who want to

settle disputes in the barangay level to avoid time constraints and the effort to be in public to discuss matters that may have positive and negative impact in one's lives.

Benter (2020) discovered that the members of the barangay justice system demonstrated only moderate responsiveness among the respondents. Furthermore, there is room for improvement in the performance of roles and responsibilities on the part of the "lupon and pangkat" regarding the referral of cases. This inadequacy is one reason why some individuals seek assistance from the media to prompt a faster response in settling their grievances. Versoza (2018), citing Balkin, outlined three fundamental functions of media in government: 1) providing the public with information about the nature and dynamics of government, 2) influencing political decisions and dynamics, and 3) acting as a watchdog to hold public officials accountable for their actions and decisions. For some individuals, the media offers a broader possibility and opportunity for their issues and concerns to be addressed promptly. On the other hand, the Barangay Justice System serves as a mechanism for resolving disputes amicably at the barangay level. Its objectives include promoting the efficient administration of justice and relieving the courts of minor criminal and civil cases. It functions as an administrative body within the barangay, allowing community members to reconcile their differences without resorting to the judicial process. This approach helps avoid the prolonged and costly settlement of disputes in court.

Educational Material on the Importance of Due Process of Law and Fair Trial at the Barangay Level

Based on the results of the perspectives on trial by publicity and its perceived effects on the judicial system at the barangay level, our team designed and crafted educational material on the importance of due process of law and fair trial at the barangay level.

This educational material has two faces: (1) a promotional and educational video on the due process of law and fair trial at the barangay level and (2) printed versions of the promotional and educational video.

The promotional and educational video has four salient sections/parts: Part 1 is the introduction of the overview of the video; Part 2 is a brief discussion of what trial by publicity is; Part 3 is a brief discussion of the due process of law and fair

trial at the barangay level, and Part 4 is the interactive part of the video where viewers will be allowed to answer questions relative to the content of the material.

The medium of instruction to be used in the educational video is a combination of Standard English and Filipino. It is designed this way to make the material easy to understand, especially by the barangay constituents. Moreover, digital animation will be incorporated to make the presentation attractive and engaging.

The printed versions of the educational video will be pamphlets, brochures, and posters. The medium of instruction in the printed materials will also combine Standard English and Filipino. Caricatures will also be incorporated.

This unique material examines the profound content on trial by publicity and the due process of law while highlighting the roles of the barangay citizens, barangay officials, and media practitioners in the feat towards the correct practice of fair trial. While the material aims to educate people, it also considers the beauty of making it interactive and engaging by making it simple, informative, and easy to understand.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the perspectives on trial by publicity among barangay citizens, barangay officials, and media practitioners vary in platform, accessibility, and judgment. Barangay citizens and officials highly perceive the use of social media. In contrast, media practitioners have a lower perception, likely due to the convenience of finding resolutions, avoiding expensive legal procedures, and barangay officials' lack of training and technical capacity. In terms of accessibility, barangay citizens and media practitioners are highly perceived. In contrast, barangay officials are lower, possibly due to people's confidence in airing their sentiments publicly, the media's better access to involved parties, and the faster achievement of justice through media exposure. All three groups are highly aware of trial by publicity's objectives, with barangay officials being very highly aware. The knowledge and experiences of settling complaints, personal rights, and media handling contribute to their awareness. Barangay officials and media practitioners are very aware of the procedure. At the same time, citizens are highly aware, likely due to their roles in settling complaints, the media's cautiousness, and citizens'

familiarity with complaint resolutions. In terms of judgment, all three groups are highly aware, possibly due to the orientation of barangay officials and media practitioners and citizens' confidence in entrusting complaints to proper authorities. However, immediate action and resolution are needed to avoid resorting to trial by publicity. The data shows a significant difference in perspectives on trial by publicity and awareness of due process, rejecting the null hypothesis and accepting the alternative hypothesis. Additionally, there is no significant relationship between perspectives on trial by publicity and awareness of due process based on the given data. Trial by publicity is a manipulative process that disregards the truth, characterizes individuals without justification, and undermines the justice system and civil rights. It favors instability and lacks balance, ultimately leading to incalculable misery for all parties involved. Based on the conclusions drawn from the study, it is recommended that barangay officials undergo comprehensive training, seminars, and workshops to enhance their technical capacity in handling complaints. This will improve access to dispute resolution mechanisms and strengthen barangay governance and justice. The barangay citizens should be educated on the proper procedures for raising complaints. To achieve this, a handbook containing detailed information about the actual complaint processes and different katarungang pambarangay forms should be developed. Furthermore, to further enhance understanding, future researchers could conduct a similar study focusing on the correlation between the profile of the respondents and their perceptions of the dispute resolution system. This could involve analyzing factors such as gender, age, and educational background to determine if there are significant differences in their experiences. In addition, further research should be conducted to validate the tool or instrument used in this study. This would ensure its reliability and validity, enhancing the credibility of future research in this area. Researchers are encouraged to explore and incorporate additional variables that can be correlated with the concept of trial by publicity. This could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing public perceptions and attitudes toward dispute resolution. Lastly, one highly effective recommendation is creating a program that actively engages the community, including barangay citizens, officials, and other stakeholders, in understanding the principles of dealing with various laws. This program could involve the participation of well-versed lawyers who analyze real cases and educate the public through online platforms.

By providing in-depth analysis, teaching proper fact-checking, and demonstrating different possible rulings for studied cases, this program would help educate the public and raise awareness about the truth behind legal issues. The objective would be to equip individuals with the necessary knowledge and analytical tools to navigate their way of life more effectively.

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