

**THE ROLE OF FILIPINO CHILDREN IN THE GUERRILLA WAR AGAINST
THE JAPANESE IN PANAY, 1942-1945**

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ABSTRACT

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This is a study about the significant role of Filipino children in the guerrilla resistance movement in Panay, from 1942 to 1945. The study seeks to: (a) identify who were these child guerrillas who participated in the guerrilla war, (b) ascertain the reasons why they participated in the resistance movement, (c) identify what roles they played and analyze how their roles helped the guerrilla resistance movement in Panay.

The researcher utilized the technique of oral history and narratives of child guerrillas who were former members of the 61st Infantry Division. Secondary informants, who have knowledge about the resistance movement in Panay during the Second World War, like relatives, friends, and unit mates/comrades-in-arms of the child guerrillas were also interviewed. The approach used by the researcher in interviewing the informants was informal and did not make use of a questionnaire. The researcher let the informants tell their experiences during the guerrilla war. Materials from various libraries such as books, theses, magazines, memoirs, military documents were also utilized. The collected data were then analyzed and cross-examined by corroborating the testimonies of the primary and secondary informants and findings in the library research in order to establish the authenticity of their narratives.

From the informants, the researcher found out that there were a variety of reasons why they participated in the guerrilla resistance movement. Among these were patriotism, personal grievances, to satisfy their sense of adventure, and economic conditions. The researcher also found out that adult guerrillas coerced some of the children.

The research reveals that the contributions of children to the guerrilla movement were very significant. Their responsibilities as guerrillas include guarding mobile guerrilla installations; doing household chores, like cooking, washing clothes, cleaning weapons and campgrounds; and giving first aid to wounded guerrillas. Some of the child guerrillas were also involved in intelligence operations, signal and communications assignments, and military/combat operations.

The researcher also found out from credible informants that there were almost a hundred child guerrillas who served the 61st Division. Most of them are still unidentified.