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**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

**Lived Experiences on the PNP Frontline Services and Customer Services**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study explored the implementation the Police Administrative and Operational response rules and regulation; Lived Experiences on the PNP Frontline Services of the and Customer Services. The researcher gets to know the lived experiences of the law enforcer specially those who are assigned as frontline police officer and to know what innovative practices can be proposed base on the findings of this study. The researchers use the qualitative researched specifically the Husserlian descriptive phenomenology method (Christensen et al, 2017) Descriptive phenomenology focuses on the essence of human experiences, or what humans experienced and how they experienced that phenomenon while they were in the state of intentional consciousness. This leads to phenomenological purity. In this study, phenomenological purity was applied with pure phenomenological attitude towards the phenomenon, and any interpretation by the researcher was minimized, again, by the researcher (Lester, 2004), with the least number of perceptions, judgments, biases, or preconceived ideas about the phenomenon, using the epoch, or bracketing, method. It emphasizes the 'pure' description of people's experiences, to the 'interpretation' of such experiences. The experiences of the police front liners and the client's satisfaction will be treated with objectivity and credibility in the interpretation without biases from the researcher's perspective. From the 78 significant statements of the participants' narratives, four themes and six subthemes emerge: Theme 1: I am a Frontline Police Officer (Sub-theme 1: Training and Education); Theme 2: I am a public Servant (Sub-theme 1: Life at risk, Sub-theme 2: Service for Peace, Sub-theme 3: Commitment and Passion); Theme 3: Different Strokes, Different Feelings (Sub-theme 1; Services appreciated and Sub-theme 2: Inhumanities Despised). There are challenges encountered by the frontline police officer while performing their duty such as cases filed against the responding police officer, political influences and obtain injury or killed during the conduct of operation. These are the challenges discovered during the implementation of laws, ordinances, rules and regulations that need to be addressed in attaining the goal of the Philippine National Police towards the peace and order. An Intervention program could be implemented in the different police station in Central Visayas.

**KEYWORDS**

*Live experience, Frontline Police Officer, Life at risks, Commitment and passion, Services appreciated, and Inhumanities despised.*

**ARTICLE INFORMATION**

**ACCEPTED:** 10 January 2022

**PUBLISHED:** 03 February 2025

**DOI:** 10.32996/ijlps.2025.8.2.1

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**1. Introduction**

The delivery of high-quality frontline service is one of the most important and most difficult tasks in any organization. Most of the time, the Philippine National Police faces this kind of problem because people are more perceptible on the value of the delivery of quality service. It has been an issue in the organization about the slow-moving in police administrative and operation functions such as in police response, traffic incidents, securing police clearance and police blotter entry.

The Philippine National Police organization initiated many programs and strategies to improve the delivery of quality service to the community. Despite these efforts, the negative public perceptions are still persisted. They are more concerned with waiting

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time, cost, convenience and hospitality when they avail of the service. These problems are very serious considering that the police are a public trust and mandated to serve and protect in order to gain the trust and confidence of the public. The programs and strategies implemented by the Police may still not have reached the level of satisfaction that the community desired, especially on the frontline service.

In 2007, Republic Act No. 9485, otherwise known as the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007 was enacted into law. The purpose of the law was to improve efficiency in the delivery of government services to the public. Its aim was to reduce bureaucratic red tape and prevent graft and corruption. In addition, heads of government offices were made accountable to the public by requiring them to render fast, efficient, convenient and reliable public service. The law also reduced action on documents to five working days for simple transactions while giving a minimum period of ten days for complex transactions.

It was also in the same year of 2007 that R.A. No. 9485 was passed, which aimed to improve efficiency in the delivery of government services to the public, that paved changes in the PNP. When the PNP Citizen's Charter was implemented, it signaled the police to give a courteous, efficient, and prompt frontline service provider, willing to serve the public at all times. However, despite of this act the delayed of the delivery causes the dissatisfaction of the client of frontline services still persist.

People are complaining in television, radio, newspapers and even in the social media. The Regional office is receiving through 8888 of more or less 20 – 25 complaints in months (RO7-PCR 2019). They are more concerned with waiting time, cost, convenience and hospitality when they avail of the service of the police especially on frontline services such as in police response, traffic incidents, securing police clearance and police blotter entry.

Some of the reports was sent on November 18, 2017 at 11:23:22 PM, concern regarding Riding in Tandem and Alleged Illegal Gun Factory in Sitio Ranger, Barangay Poooc, Talisay City, Cebu.

The researcher is a member of the Philippine National Police and was assigned in the different Municipal Police Stations in Central Visayas. The researcher as Chief of Police, has direct involvement in the implementation of laws and ordinances. At present, the researcher is designated as the Chief, Research and Analysis Section (RAS) of the Regional Investigation Detective Management Division (RIDMD), Police Regional Office 7 (PRO7), Cebu.

With the above situations, the researcher would like to determine the causes of the delay of delivery of services to the community and to find out clients' perceptions on the quality of PNP services. Results of this study can be the basis to formulate plans and programs to improve quality frontline services.

## **2. Atheoretical Stance**

Since this research relies on how the key informants narrate and explain their lived experiences of the PNP frontline services and customer services, this research suspended the use of theory in order to give the key informants the flexibility to give rich and thick descriptions of their lived experiences.

## **3. Research Methodology**

### **3.1 Research Design**

The study used the Husserlian descriptive phenomenology method. Descriptive phenomenology focuses on the essence of human experiences, or what humans experienced and how they experienced that phenomenon while they were in the state of intentional consciousness. This leads to phenomenological purity. In this study, phenomenological purity was applied with pure phenomenological attitude towards the phenomenon, and any interpretation by the researcher was minimized, again, by the researcher (Lester, 2004), with the least number of perceptions, judgments, biases, or preconceived ideas about the phenomenon, using the epoch, or bracketing, method. It emphasizes the 'pure' description of people's experiences, to the 'interpretation' of such experiences.

The experiences of the police front liners and the client's satisfaction will be treated with objectivity and credibility in the interpretation without biases from the researcher's perspective.

### **3.2 Research Environment**

The study was conducted in Cebu Police Provincial Office (CPPO). The six selected police station is the focus of the study considering the population and the services provided by the police. The delay of the delivery of services still the concern of the community. This is the challenge of the researcher to determine its causes.

Cebu is located at the center of the Philippine Islands. Due to its geographical location, it plays a vital role in the exchange of trade, transportation and communication, thus, Cebu is considered as a natural hub of the archipelago. Cebu island is bounded on the north by the Visayan Sea, in the east by the Camotes Sea, on the west by Tanon Strait, and on southeast by Bohol Strait. Cebu has the total land area of 4,933 square km<sup>2</sup>. It is composed of 6 component cities, 44 municipalities, and 1,066 barangays, and three (3) chartered cities, it is also divided into seven (7) congressional districts. The total Population of Cebu (excluding Cebu City, Mandaue City & Lapu-Lapu City) is 3,325,385 as of May 1, 2020. (PSA Central Visayas).

The Cebu Provincial Police Office 7 has an estimated population of 115 Police Commissioned Officer (PCO) and 2,357 Police Non-Commissioned Officer as of October 2022 and most of them are in the field of duty. The place is accessible by land transportation, such as Private Vehicles, taxi, PUJ's and Motor Cycles. (CPPO Admin Office).

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People are complaining in television, radio, newspapers and even in the social media. Some of the reports was sent on November 18, 2017 at 11:23:22 PM, concern regarding Riding in Tandem and Alleged Illegal Gun Factory in Sitio Ranger, Barangay Poo, Talisay City, Cebu.

### **3.3 Research Participants**

This research utilized purposive sampling. A purposeful sample is a non-probability sample which is chosen based on population characteristics and research. Purposive sampling is also called selective, judgmental or arbitrary sampling (Crossman and Cairns, 1974). The key informants were deliberately chosen on the basis of the requirements of the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

**Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria.** The identification of the key informants of the study was based on a set of predefined characteristics which served as the basis of the selection of informants for the study. To become the informants of the study, he or she must meet the following criteria. The police officers must have 1) undergone the same mandatory training (Basic Recruitment Course, Junior Leadership Course and Senior Leadership Course) 2) responded to a client's need or request, 3) willing to be an informant of the study. To ensure that the right police personnel will be approached, each designated frontline service personnel should be covered by an office order and mandatory training and development, if there be any. It is very important to stress that according to Creswell (2013) that research key informants must have experience on the subject being studied. However, there must be representation from both sexes. The client must 1) be a resident of the city for more than five years, 2) be 18 years old and above, 3) have experienced asking for police assistance, 3) social well-being, 4) be willing to be a participant of the study.

In the final selection of participants, data saturation principle was applied. During the interview, the data saturated at participant number seven, but one participant was added for validation. Hence, there were eight police officers and eight civilians that were considered in this study.

This kind of sampling works well when key informants are studied represents people who have actually experienced and being studied. Furthermore, the list of prospect key informants is obtained from the Municipal Police Station in CPPO.

### **3.4 Research Instruments**

For the phenomenology, the researcher is the main instrument of the study guided by a semi-structured interview. The interview guide has three main questions and ten follow-up questions. The interview guide is grouped as preliminary, developmental and wrap-up questions.

It is noteworthy mention that the researcher will serve as a champion or means to attain the ends or purposes of the semi-structured interview. The researcher will play a substantial role as the main initiator or facilitator of the instrument and to arouse the interest and participation of the key informants by giving them topics as subjects that spark their curiosity and appreciation on the whole inquiry.

### **3.5 Data Gathering Procedures**

**Pre-Data Gathering Phase.** Prior to the study, the researcher shall send a letter to the University of the Visayas' Dean of Graduate School. The said letter indicated the researcher's intent to obtain the required permission for approval for the conduct of this study.

The researcher also sends a communication to Regional Director, PRO7 and Regional Training Director of Regional Training Center 7 requesting to conduct research in identified police stations and students. The selected PNP personnel will be interviewed through

face-to-face. However, the researcher will hire enumerator to facilitate the interview questionnaire to avoid bias and influence to the PNP personnel and clients since the researcher is a senior officer of the PNP.

Upon approval of said request, the researcher reached data saturation after attaining the hypothetical number of participants. There is a point in the research process where there is sufficient data that has been collected by the researcher which is known as data saturation. By such enough data, a researcher can already draw the necessary conclusion that to collect further data will only be unproductive or will not produce value-added insights.

**Actual Data Gathering Phase.** Since the researcher is a member of the PNP, to avoid bias and influence to the participants, the researcher hired enumerator for interview and will utilize a semi-structured interview guide approach and a uniform set of open-ended question to acquire (a) demographic information on the key informants and (b) key informants understanding and experiences on the delivery of frontline service in the local level and issues challenging the same. Open-ended question is use to encourage key informants to answer freely and openly to inquiries. If it deems necessary, to encourage key informant to expound on or elucidate their answers or responses to the interview. The researcher writes and note the informants' answers; a recorder is use for further analyses and transcript creation after the conducted interview. The key participants are informed about the purpose of the study. However, several limitations are expected, such as but not limited to, apprehensions of revealing too much information or uncooperatively. The estimated average duration of the interview of the key informants is about 30 to 45 minutes. They are interview face to face inside the training center classroom during free time.

**Post Data Gathering Phase.** The qualitative responses of the participants to the interviews were transcribed and Visayan dialect was translated to English ready for analysis. To avoid bias and influence to the participants the researcher hired a translator to translate their responses from Visayan into English.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

In analyzing the data, this research utilized Colaizzi's method of data analysis. this methods is usually used for qualitative research in which it will go through the following seven steps. Stage 1. Familiarizing. The researcher got to know the details by going through the description a considerable number of times in order to get more acquainted. Step 2. Identifying significant statements. The researcher identified claims that are explicitly applicable to the topic under review from the transcribed interviews of the key informants. Step 3. Formulation meaning. The researcher identified the meanings that are considered relevant to the phenomenon that will emerge based on a thorough and cautious consideration of the important statements provided by the key informants (Praveena and Sasikumar 2021).

Being the researcher, the researcher reflexively "bracket" her own presuppositions to be able to stick closely to the phenomenon as experienced by the key informants. Step 4. Clustering themes. The researcher then clustered the identified meanings common across the accounts into themes. Then, again it was important to bracket the researchers' presuppositions so as to avoid potential influence on the processing of the lived experiences of the key informants. Step 5. Developing and exhaustive description. The researcher wrote a full and inclusive description of the phenomenon, incorporating now all the themes produced at step 4. Step 6. Producing the fundamental structure. The researcher condensed the exhaustive description to a short statement by which the researcher saw those aspects deemed to be necessary to the structure of the phenomenon. Step 7. Seeking verification of the fundamental structure. Finally, the researcher returned to the fundamental structure statement of the key informants to asks whether or not the statements truly reflect their lived experiences.

### **3.7 Ethical Considération**

The following points were considered in this study to ensure that the human rights will be protected, that the benefits out-weights the risk if there are any, that content, comprehension and documentation of informed consent have to be observed, authorization to access private information have to be prepared prior to the research data gathering, confidentiality procedures, debriefing, communications and referrals, and conflict of interest shall be taken into consideration.

## **4. Results and Discussions**

### **4.1 I am Frontline police officer.**

PNP frontline officers perform tasks that provide essential services to the community such as Administrative and Police Operational response. In fact, they are typically in the trenches, handling problems, overcoming obstacles and representing the PNP organization in community appearances and interactions. Frontline officers are the agents interacting directly with the community. According to Rosenberg (1965), self-esteem is one's positive or negative attitude toward oneself and one's evaluation of one's own thoughts and feelings overall in relation to oneself. PNP personnel assigned and designated as frontliners are the key players in the PNP organization in winning the trust and confidence of the people within their area of responsibility.

*The work is okay so far; everything is going well. There's no problem (Informant 1).*

*Its more fun and decent giving service to the people. Whenever they need our service, we can attend to their needs, us being public servants. It is specially fulfilling when we can resolve their problems, legal problems, legal aspect, we can give assistance to them (Informant 2).*

Being a police officer is still a noble profession. Despite of the negative issues, police should remain dedicated, honest and loyal to their organization and to serve the communities with dignity and honor. According to Lewis (2005), the confidence of the public to the government is based on trust. As such, ethics in the delivery of government work is essential. As the saying goes and mandated in our Constitution, public office is a public trust. It requires all personnel in the government service be accountable to the people, serve them with utmost responsibility, integrity, loyalty, and efficiency; act with patriotism and justice, and lead modest lives.

*We are in the frontline as public servants. It is our duty to guide the public to follow the law. Thereafter, we can implement what is proper and correct. If there are clients who approach us to report or file a complaint, we should assist them to the best of our ability. We should not discriminate if they are poor or rich. All should be treated properly so all of them who avail of our service or those who need our help will be satisfied (Informant 3).*

Frontliners are essential in the workforce. They are the personnel who comes face to face with the public. Larsen & Blair (2009) found that were four variables that reflect police performance and these were (1) response time to a crime in progress, (2) visibility on the street, (3) the quality of relationship between the police and the community, and (4) police efforts to reduce crime. They author suggested that training programs should be oriented to these four variables.

Paoline and Gao (2019) found out that extrinsic factors as equipment's, uniforms and cars are primary sources of dissatisfactions of police officers. Also included where the factors on discontent were the inability to concentrate on the crime and the expansive roles of the police. The pay, benefits, retirement and pension plan were an important positive feature of the occupation but were also sources of negative ones.

It is thus a given fact that for the police officers to be able to perform their job well in the delivery of public service to the community they serve, it is important that they are given the proper support by the government, either coming from the local chief executive or from the organic department, which support may be in the form of equipment's, proper uniform for every operation and police mobility.

Police work is also imbued with danger. This fact is known to all officers that the police work will sometimes put their life and limb in danger. In the following response of one respondent, he relayed his fears and anxiety on the dangers posed by police work.

*The excitement and the thrill of the job. We cannot ascertain or predict when there will be an alarm. Sometimes, when we respond to alarms, our lives are placed in danger (Informant 4).*

Law enforcement is a dangerous profession not only due to assaults, accidents and homicides but also due to health risks (Violanti, et al., 2020). Policing is one of the most dangerous occupations and is consistently placed in the top five occupations for injuries and fatalities as a result of occupational violence. (Prenzler, 2012 as cited by Hine, 2018).

Respondents perceive that their work not only entails the rendering of police work but they should also have a good relationship with the clients they serve. Among the identified personal qualities were that they should be approachable, especially in cases where the clients will require certificates, ask for assistance and other police functions. Aside from that, police officers, especially the frontliners, are expected by the clients to be knowledgeable about their (police) job so they can ask for guidance on matters.

*First, a police officer needs to be friendly; second, he/she should be approachable; three, I guess he should be able to give a sound advice when needed by the people we serve (Informant 7).*

*For me, as a police officer, our job is to enforce the law. That is what we need to do. To enforce the law and ready to serve the people. But it is not always that we should place the law into our own hands. We should be flexible. It is dangerous if we, as police officers, will go beyond our power. For example, about illegal fishing, when I was assigned in Lapulapu. If we impose the law to the letter and be strict about it, the people relying on fishing, will be pitiful. But since we are in the position as police officers, aside from enforcing the law, we also need to educate them (Informant 8).*

Service, honor and justice is the philosophy of the PNP. That means police officers are reminded to always render the highest form of public service for our fellowmen regardless of status in life. To serve the citizenry with the commitment of sacrifice and willingness to die in service of God, country and people.

Police departments should attempt to provide their services with equal treatment and level of quality to every group of the community (Marcos, et al., 2020). The importance of a flexibility-oriented organizational culture should be underlined as critical for the police to develop appropriate strategies to address community conflicts effectively.

Reforms to improve policing may require the following: (1) a greater focus on testing a wide array of police responses and the interaction effects between theoretically relevant characteristics of the police officer and the tactic or strategy being tested; (2) using science to help establish performance criteria for measuring work quality; (3) paying more attention to understanding the processes of police interactions, not just outcomes; (4) applying research to improving officers' communication skills; and (5) discovering ways to use science to advance understanding about the values guiding police discretion (Willis and Mastrofski, 2018).

#### **4.1.1 Training and Education**

A job cannot be done without proper training. Training and education are fundamentally an evaluation that inspects the level to which training enhanced the employee's skill, knowledge, and behavior inside the organization. In this study all key informants are College graduates. They are also a graduate of mandatory courses in the PNP such as Public Safety Basic Recruitment Course, Public Safety Junior Leadership Course and specialized courses offered by the Philippine National Police. When asks the essence of their training in delivering frontline quality service in the community, these were their responses.

*Personally, it added to our education, on things like what law to apply to specific situations (Informant 4).*

Police training can positively impact in police service because it improves job satisfaction, engagement, and retention. By embracing training and development, police officer can increase their knowledge and skills. It is important because it represents a good opportunity to grow their career and improve their job skills to become more effective in the workplace.

A professional and well-trained law enforcement officers are better suited to serve the needs of the public while at the same time are abler to protect themselves from the dangers of the streets and the threat of civil litigation.

#### **4.1.2 I am a public servant.**

Typically, police officers undergo the basic training. As soon as they finish training, they will put on their uniform and ready to be deployed in the field. The police officers' main responsibilities are to serve and protect the community. When they are already in the actual performance of duty, as a senior police officer, it is their duty to supervise their junior police officers. They are much more than experienced in the field of police service and ensure compliances. They will coordinate with the staff, set goals and guidelines in order accomplish the goals.

In the book of Kirschman (2018), she identified factors that affect an officer's work in the organization. These are: the job itself – meaning the physical, intellectual and emotional demands of the work; the amount of control officers can exert over these demands; the organizational culture and leadership style of their agencies; the quality of available training; the absence or presence of opportunities for career development; the relationship between their departments and the community; the individual facts such as the officer's personality and stule of coping with stress, the quality and availability of family relationships and support systems, health concerns, and financial stability and luck.

*Based on my experience, we all need to start from the basics. We also need to observe and learn from our senior police officers (Informant 5)*

The officers on the field would also like that their performance be appreciated by community they serve. They see to it that they present themselves to the public that they are always ready to serve. In fact, some respondents find it a source of inspiration in cases they are given praise by the citizens, especially those whom they were able to serve well.

#### **4.1.2.1 My life is at risk**

Law enforcement officers face many different dangerous and stressful situations in the line of duty. The prime duty of the police is to prevent crime and disorder to include administrative frontline delivery of service. In police response, in particular can be dangerous as one might be injured or even killed in operation. In this study, the informants shared the reality at the grassroots level while delivering frontline quality service, these were their responses.

*Serving other people despite all the risks that we take, especially in the line of duty, just to protect other people's lives. When there is a police encounter and you were hit by a bullet, you become thankful that you are still alive (Informant 2).*

*Being a public servant is not always easy. Risk is always there. There should always be presence of mind. Dedication to the job. Foremost is presence of mind (Informant 3).*

According to Dewey (1974), experience is a 'natural' phenomenon, not outside of the human species but completely inside of it as part of our evolutionary make-up. Experience denotes the way living organisms interact with their environment. For humans, the environment is social, cultural and political. The key informant of this study shared their significant experiences being designated and assigned as frontline officer particularly in the implementation of laws, rules and regulations of the land. The informants were asked about their personal experiences in dealing with the community while performing their official functions in the PNP, these were their responses.

*About my experience on this, I learned to be more careful and be alert. Because there will be people who will still complain even if you are doing your job properly (Informant 1).*

*There are really some complaints. Like that time when I was still a tourist police, we responded to an alarm about an armed person. It was a legitimate response made by us but a case was still filed against us before the Ombudsman (Informant 3)*

*There are. Feedback of people who reported an alarm which you responded. If you are late because of some other duties, the people will not be satisfied with the performance made by every police officer even if we have done our best (Informant 4).*

Police officers normally deal with people behaving at their worst. Most of the time they encounter verbally abusive, physically argumentative citizens especially those who have knowledge about the law. Despite these experiences, most police officer agrees that in order to be effective, police need to understand the situation and have a detailed knowledge about the people, places and culture in the areas where they serve.

*I was able to experience also, when I was still a Police Officer 1. I was still new in the division and we responded to an alarm. It was a first-time call, then we went there right away. The complainant was a lawyer, a known person in the municipality (Informant 1).*

*The same experience which I relayed earlier. When I was not yet a tourist police. The station responded to an alarm about an armed person. It was a legitimate operation but there was a case filed against us in the Ombudsman. That experience is one of my negative experiences in the service (Informant 3).*

The most common problems encountered by police personnel while on duty nowadays is when one person takes advantage of their position of power over them. The Local Chief Executives has the operational and administrative control of the local police. Some other influential professionals also have some indirect control. In this situation police leaders must take a step and evaluate these negative factors and others to determine if the officers themselves are an integral part of the negative experiences in the service.

Under Republic Act No. 6975, passed into law on December 13, 1990, the Philippine National Police is administered and controlled by the National Police Commission and is part of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG). This was also what was stated under R.A. No. 8551. Thus, it is the local chief executives of cities and municipalities who control the local policemen and the governor who controls the regional officers. There are problems that beset the PNP because of its being under the local chief executives. The latter would always be at the lookout for police officers are sympathetic to their political careers. In fact, local chief executives are given the choice of who to appoint as chief of police in towns and cities. It is also a given fact that Regional Directors are changed from time to time if they catch the ire of governors in the province where they are assigned. In 2019, House Bill No. 1982 was proposed to transfer to the Philippine National Police the power to exercise operational supervision and control over police units assigned or stationed in local government units. The bill's aim was to do away with the "debt of gratitude" mentality and to bolster the commitment of the members of the PNP to fulfill their duty to enforce the law without fear or favor. The aim of the bill was also to do away with any political patronage because the PNP officers are qualified, capable and effective to serve and protect the people in the locality. However, the bill did not pass as a law.

Despite the negative experience, there are also redeeming factors that respondents experienced in their work assignments. The positive experiences eclipse the negative that is why the police officers are still willing to serve the country. What follows is the positive experiences of our police officers.

*The positive impact. When I apprehended a person who was carrying a firearm without a license. I told him why and in a manner that he will understand as to why he was being apprehended. Now, we are friends. He said that at least, I did not shoot him. Had*

*he resisted, I would have fired at him. When I told him to lay down his firearm, he followed right away and placed his firearms down (Informant 4).*

*For me, mostly positive experiences. Especially in cases where we were able to help solve the crime because it was handled correctly. Those instances were my best experiences as they have a big impact to the public. There are also negative experiences. Some, if it is because of politics, because of requests and accommodation. That's the negative side, because some will be against you (Informant 5).*

*There are negative experiences. Especially for me, who is designated as an alert driver. There are alarms and armed encounters. We do not know what will happen on those instances. You are not sure if you will be safe or not (Informant 6).*

*The negative aspect of the work is when politics is involved already when we do our police work (Informant 7).*

*There are some bad experiences. One is when you are charged falsely; when they say that you are a protector, something like that. Also, the people we apprehended made it a personal matter. They say that we are sleeping on the job and doing nothing. We apprehend the minor players but not the big-time players. What can we do when we do not see the persons, they say that we should apprehend? It is the small-time illegal activities which we can see because that is what is reported to us. If we do not do any action on the small-time offenders, we are the ones who are placed in a bad light. Another example, this illegal drug. When we apprehend persons violating the drugs law, they file cases against us in retaliation like robbery, illegal detention, violation of domicile, but thankfully, all were dismissed since the counter charges had no basis (Informant 8).*

Maintaining the positive image of the police has always been a challenge since the days of the first known police force dating back to the 1800s. With the advent of social media, this challenge is amplified exponentially. At a moment's notice, the misdeeds of one officer can go viral across the globe without any ability to mitigate or reconcile the damage.

Sir Robert Peel said, "Police must secure the willing cooperation of the public in voluntary observance of the law to be able to secure and maintain the respect of the public (Gash 2011). The positive image of the police is more critical now more than any other time in recent history. They are doing their best to maintain their image. It takes great courage and get back to some basics to win it back the trust and confidence and address all of the negative aspects that detract from the job.

It is also noted that while respondents aspire to be called heroes in the community, there are also increasing number of factors that raises the negative image of the police. As like in any other organization, the wrongdoing of a single persons results to a downright negative image of all belonging to the same organization. As noted by a researcher (Terpstra and Salet, 2019), the increasing use of mobile phone cameras, social media and video-sharing platforms has strongly contributed to a "new visibility" of the police. Thus, the increasing number of electronic eyes watching the police, and the fast and widespread dissemination of videos, the risk of any claim of police heroism is easier to be debunked. In other words, the culture of social media of people in the community makes the accountability easier to claim than before when everything can be blacked out. The transparency is much harder to disprove.

Police officer is not an easy job. Every day, they perform their duties in some of the most dangerous and demanding circumstances. They are often required to make difficult, split-second decisions under emergency circumstances that others will take days and months to scrutinize. In this situation, police officer with high tolerance and stability under pressure is required to maintain composure, and to have sound judgement and decision-making skills during times of need.

#### **4.1.2.2 Service for peace**

Police officers can be an inspiration to the community. The good deeds being done by active police officers influence the people. The portrayals of law enforcement from popular media, movie, television series or book, the information people absorb regarding police can be inspirational and relevant in their real lives. As noted by Hoel and Christensen (2020) ethical considerations can help leadership to improve efficiency and performance at the workplace. It was also noted in another study that policing is learned foremost through their experience or what they term as - acknowledging learning through practice (Filstad, et al., 2020).

*What is important is that we are able to help the people, as police officer and as a person. As police officers, we can also give them inspiration. They can look up to us and idolize us, as a good police officer (Informant 7).*

Like in all workplace, there are always positive and negative experiences, especially when one is doing public service. It is not at all times that people will be satisfied with the service that is given them. There are many factors affecting the quality of service and the giver of the service is not at all times in control of a situation.



*For me, the best experience is when I am able to help the community through police information. Also, in instances where you can enforce ordinances (Informant 7).*

*I did it because that is the oath and commitment that we took as a police officer. We cannot go easy on the job (Informant 2).*

*In the police service, if you will just love your job and be straight on it, the output to the community is very nice (Informant 4)*

*When we apprehend people, we should not hesitate to do it, as long as that person was correctly charged. We should really enforce the law and apprehend the person violating the law. But if the offense can be referred to the barangay, it will be better. For example, that talking against a person, or libel, it is better if the parties are settled so the situation will not get worse and the parties may reconcile. However, the crimes involving illegal drugs, illegal logging and similar acts, is a different matter (Informant 8).*

*That experience I had made me realize to be aware and be always on my toes. It taught me to be careful. It also served as a lesson to me that even if you do your job straight, there will always be a possibility that charges will be filed against you. We should not think about it in a negative manner but rather, the same should be made as a corrective measure to be better in the service as a police officer (Informant 1).*

*There are times that there are allegations that we give favor to one side in our investigation. But we explain to them that the statements indicated on the document is not ours but we got them from the people. We took down notes and their statement for the purpose of conducting our investigation (Informant 5).*

*If there is a need to apprehend a violator, we should not hesitate. We should be in the side of the truth, enforce the law and if they violate it, they should be apprehended (Informant 8).*

The police are entrusted with the duty of maintaining the peace and harmony of a society. Moreover, they also have the right to arrest and control people who do not follow the law. As a result, they are important as they protect our society.

Police who have been exposed in patrol duties have the most experience in maintaining peace and order. They can engage community and personally received real concerns and give outright solutions. Good police-community relations are imperative for developing trust between police and citizens. Without this trust, police work becomes much less effective. Even if the police officers are preventing crime, the people may not feel safe because there is no trust.

In handling problems of the community, the police must be able to balance the situation and consider alternatives before deciding on the most logical course of action. If the police don't work for it the purpose to find solution and deliver good service to the community is impossible.

#### **4.1.2.3 Commitment and Passion**

The PNP, in support to Anti-Red Tape Act and Ease of Doing Business Act, has adopted various modifications and revisited its frontline services for the convenience of the transacting public minus the unnecessary voluminous documents. This act is to improve efficiency in the delivery of government services to the public by reducing bureaucratic red tape, preventing graft and corruption. In the same year with the PNP Citizen's Charter was implemented, the public is now assured of more courteous, efficient, and prompt frontline service providers willing to be of service 24/7.

However, despite of this act the delay of the delivery causes the dissatisfaction of the client of frontline services still persist because of unavoidable circumstances such as lack of mobility, traffic problem, distance of the responding areas, supplies and the multi-tasking of the PNP personnel or may be the assigned personnel is lack of knowledge and trainings to handle customer services. When asked about how to satisfy the community with their services, these were their responses.

*We need to attend to their needs, that we should be able to satisfy them when we gave them assistance on the reasons why they went to our station. For example, if they have a case, we should investigate if we can file a case against the person being complained of (Informant 2).*

*As a tourist police, our job is to see to it and ensure the safety of our locals and foreign tourists. We focus more on police visibility (Informant 3).*

*At the time that they complained, they were asking why it was done that way. We explained to them in accordance with what we know about the law and its relevance to the incident that they reported to us (Informant 4).*

*Mostly, I explain to them, especially if a case is only up to the barangay level. We tell them to request in the barangay. We explain to them on how a case moves. We tell them that they can file anytime but the degree of proof that they had will only merit a lesser offense (Informant 5).*

*Yes. If you are the person assigned to the case, you should give importance and time on it. You should accommodate. You should not neglect it. Because the satisfaction rate on us will be affected in the Police Community Relation /PCR (Informant 6).*

*Maybe what we can give them is our sincerity (Informant 7).*

To give real service, you must add something which cannot be bought or measured with money, and that is integrity and sincerity" (Adams 1997).

The Police shall exercise proper and legitimate use of authority in the performance of duty. They shall not allow themselves to be victims of corruption and dishonest practices in accordance with the provisions of RA 6713 and other applicable laws. In police service, sincerity is about being honest and genuine with the community. They shall serve with utmost responsibility, integrity, morality, loyalty and efficiency with due respect to human rights and dignity as hallmark of a democratic society.

Police typically are responsible for maintaining public order and safety, enforcing the law, and preventing, detecting, and investigating criminal activities. These functions are known as policing. Police are often also entrusted with various licensing and regulatory activities.

#### **4.1.3 Different Strokes, Different Feelings**

Every individual is unique. In this world of life, each have different views, ideas, discipline, and beliefs. These different interests of life will help build friendship and making a happy life. The individual interest may vary it depends of their mood. They wanted to try different things because it allows to further explore their experiences about certain things that might be useful in the future. The police have the ability to accept delay, suffering, or annoyance without complaint or anger. They accept failure, one of it is the negative feedback from the community. As police officer, it is part of their job because without failure police don't grow and become a better version of a frontline police officer. Experiencing failure teaches the police a lesson that can guide them not make the wrong decision again.

##### **4.1.3.1 Services appreciated.**

According to Oliver (1980) disconfirmation was positively related to consumer satisfaction. Positive disconfirmation (perceived performance above the expectation) increased consumer satisfaction, while negative disconfirmation (perceived performance below the expectation) decreased consumer satisfaction.

According to Vidali 2020, the most important thing law enforcement can do when building police-community relations is to co-create your mission with those you serve. Choosing the right mission focus for a police department has to start with the community. When the informants asked their significant experiences with the services of the frontline police officer, these were their responses.

*When there was an incident involving my daughter, I asked for help from the police. My daughter was a rape victim and they help me to really file a case against the perpetrator (CI 1).*

*My good experience was when I brought a letter. Prior to that, they really helped and taught me on how to go about it. They told me the exact direction to go.... I was given specific instructions on what specific office to go (CI 2).*

*I asked for help from the police because my live-in partner slapped me without reason (CI 3).*

*I was able to apply twice for a police clearance, the one that we secure online. But I find the local police clearance easier to secure. The process was easier and fast (CI 3).*

*Oh, that time that I drove a motorcycle and there was a checkpoint (CI 6).*

*My father was caught. He was a drug user but I did not know about it. He is a drug user (CI 8).*

*Only that instance when caught because of illegal drugs (CI 8).*

The police promptly responded and performs their duties as a frontline officer. They are entrusted to protect the public against violence, crime and other harmful acts. Today the police officer answers an estimated 70 to 80 percent of calls which are neither

criminal nor directly related to law enforcement. However, the public continues to base its satisfaction with police services on response time, largely because it increases feelings of security and is thought to deter crime.

The PNP is mandated to respect life and liberty. They are sensitive and inclusive, treating everyone with dignity and compassion. They are guided by the principles of justice, employ the highest ethical standard, demand accountability, consistency, fairness and honesty in the performance of their duties. As professional police officer they take pride in the department committed to excellence in their profession, and maintain the highest standard of education in serving the country. When the informants were asked to describe how the services of the frontline police, these were their responses.

*After they received the results, their action was swift. The culprit was apprehended by the police officer who help me (CI 1).*

*So far, here in Cebu City, they are trustworthy. As to my experience, I and they collaborated, communicated and coordinated. The 3Cs. There was no hindrance or untoward incident that happened (CI 2).*

*When my father was apprehended, I was thankful. It was the will of God. It was okay that he got caught. When he came out, he was a changed man. He did not quarrel with my mother anymore (CI 7).*

*Of course it is important. They even acted right away after I told them. It was good that my daughter told me right away what happened to her. Had we caught the culprit in the act, now, he would have been given the right punishment, right then and there. It was good so that the culprit will not to evade the case that we filed against him. The police really helped, they helped us big (CI 1).*

*Well, because of that incident, I was able to learn some things. I became acquainted or knowledgeable about cases. What I heard before was that the police will go wild. But when during my experience, it was not so. The process was based on the guidelines. Their process was based on proper procedure. The importance is, based on that experience, I have more knowledge (CI 5).*

*They did their apprehension well of the person violating the traffic rules. The person had no license, the motor vehicle was not registered, the papers were incomplete. Of course, he should not be allowed to go free, he was correctly detained by the police (CI 6).*

*No he is not like that. When he comes home, he does not go out. He has no vices. He will already take care of his family when he arrives home (CI 7).*

While police acknowledge that good experience from the community there are also some who suffer of brutalities. Police officers are held liable and accountable when they commit mistakes for behaviors that violate the civil rights of citizens.

One of the most rewarding and satisfying aspects of being a police officer is the unique opportunity to help these people get out of a bad situation, get back on their feet, and ultimately turn their lives around. Millions of acts of kindness are committed each year by police officers. When the informants were asked if they are satisfied with the services of the frontline police officer, these were their responses.

*Yes, the policeman was straight and did his job well. You can seldom see policemen like him. Well, this was also my first time to seek for assistance from a police officer (CI 1).*

*I am grateful to the police officers. Because during our coordination meeting, they emphasized that they will wear police officer's uniform to distinguish them from the crowd...Most of the time, they wore their uniforms. When they were roaming around in the vicinity where we agreed and asked for their service on said particular area, we can easily distinguish them as police officers and members of the Philippine National Police (CI 2).*

*Nothing. I was just thankful to the policeman who received my call and who responded immediately (CI 3).*

*Yes, what they did was correct. There are plenty of people who do not have a license and are reckless (CI 6).*

*I am thankful. I am grateful to God that I was able to apprehend him. When he came out from the prison, he was changed. He does not quarrel or seek fights with my mother anymore (CI 7).*

The Philippine National Police as one of the tri-bureaus under the Department of the Interior and Local Government as indicated under Republic Act 6975 is mandated to enforce law, prevent and control crimes, maintain peace and order and ensure public safety and internal security with the active support of the community.

The responses of the civilian informants were determining the level of satisfaction on the services rendered by the frontline police officer. It was also revealed the differences in the informant's perception as to the different services rendered by the police. The majority of participants reported being satisfied or very satisfied with the police, except for one who suffered police brutality. Most participants also described the police as performing in the best way to guarantee safety either frequently or always. According to Bolger et al. (2021) the feedback from the community is important and encouraging results if positive perceptions regarding the police and its performance are considered to benefit compliance and community willingness to report crimes.

#### **4.1.3.2 Inhumanities despised**

Most of the respondents positively acknowledge the services of the police except for one who experience harassment and discrimination. When there is positive feedback there is a feeling that anything can be accomplished but if the feedback is negative, it should be improved. Feedback from the community is very important in PNP as this will help the organization to thrive.

*When the police apprehended me, it was an unfair arrest. That is why, I fought back and filed a case against them. Thankfully, the case against me was dismissed (CI 8).*

*I was able to observe that there are really some police officers who are abusive (CI 4).*

*I was already stressed on that day because I was continuously crying hard. I was even slapped by Sir XXX once. He kicked me twice. When we arrived here. What they did to me was not really good (CI 8).*

Misconduct by police officers is often highly publicized. These incidents of misconduct have an influence on how the public views police officers in general and cause the public to question the police department involved in the incident (Weitzer 2002). Police misconduct may be minor or major incidents. These instances of misconduct may include bribery, extortion, administrative violations, abuse of authority, sexual misconduct, and use of excessive force.

The police should adopt a community policing, cooperative efforts, physical spaces and social interaction to the community despite of controversies and problems, police brutality, violation of laws by law enforcement officers and bad image they encountered.

#### **Conclusion**

From the 78 significant statements of the participants' narratives, four themes and six subthemes emerge: Theme 1: I am a Frontline Police Officer (Sub-theme 1: Training and Education); Theme 2: I am a public Servant (Sub-theme 1: Life at risk, Sub-theme 2: Service for Peace, Sub-theme 3: Commitment and Passion); Theme 3: Different Strokes, Different Feelings (Sub-theme 1; Services appreciated and Sub-theme 2: Inhumanities Despised). There are challenges encountered by the frontline police officer while performing their duty such as cases filed against the responding police officer, political influences and obtain injury or killed during the conduct of operation. These are the challenges discovered during the implementation of laws, ordinances, rules and regulations that need to be addressed in attaining the goal of the Philippine National Police towards the peace and order. An Intervention program could be implemented in the different police station in Central Visayas.

**Funding:** This research received no external funding

**Conflicts of Interest:** Declare conflicts of interest or state "The authors declare no conflict of interest."

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