
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Police Victimization: A Threat to Life

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| ABSTRACT

This is a phenomenological study of the victims' views of police misconduct. In data collection, phenomenological interviewing was employed to capture the phenomenon's essence. This study was conducted in Cebu City, Philippines, where the participants were those victims who had experienced police misconduct. These were ten participants who were selected through purposive convenient sampling. The study utilized an interview Guide to elicit in-depth responses from the participants. Extensive interviews were conducted to establish the three stages necessary for data gathering in the survey. The research aimed to explore several areas: the participants' adverse encounters with police misconduct, how they managed these experiences, and the effects of police misconduct on both the participants and their families. Results revealed two themes regarding the participants' negative experiences of police misconduct: *Sadists in Uniform: A Deep Threat* and *Bill of Rights: Gone with the Wind*. In coping with the experiences of police misconduct, there were two themes: *Silent Outcry for Justice, Keeping in Silence Outcry for Justice, and Forgetting the Pain and Moving On*. Regarding the impact of police misconduct on the lives of the participants and their families, two (2) themes emerged: *On the Verge of Distrust and Loss of Confidence* and *Not Being Protected but Disparaged and Prosecuted*. It was recommended that police-community relations should be strengthened. This caters to information dissemination in the community, and it is a tool to establish rapport by winning again the trust and confidence of the community. And observance of the rule of law by the police officers greatly affects every common dweller in the community; if these law enforcers respect human dignity and uphold the law of the land, there will be no more police victimization.

| KEYWORDS

Criminal Justice, Police Victimization, Victims Views, Phenomenological Study, Philippines.

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

The police are the prime mover in the system of criminal justice. As such, its misbehavior or misconduct, ranging from simple to grave cases, will affect accomplishing its vision and mission differently.

The police represent one of the most omnipresent institutions in society. Police officers, along these lines, are the most noticeable delegates of the legislature. In times of danger, crisis, emergency, or distress, when an individual is uncertain of their next steps or who to turn to, the police department and an officer stand out as the most appropriate and reassuring sources of assistance. The police are regarded as the most open, intelligent, and dynamic association of any general public. Their parts, capacities, and obligations in the general public are normal to be changed and diverse from one perspective and confounded, knotty, and complex on the other. Extensively, the twin parts, which the police rely on to play in a general public, support law and upkeep of requests. Nonetheless, the repercussions of these two obligations are various, which create an expansive stock of obligations, capacities, forces, parts, and duties for the police association.

A basic condition for an effective and efficient criminal justice system is the genuine trust and confidence of the general public. This trust and confidence spells the difference between an actively supportive public on the one hand and an apathetic community on the other hand. It is the building block of successful crime prevention strategies.

There are various reasons why people do not trust law enforcement anymore. One example is the recent killings involving police scalawags. The extrajudicial killings and the police corruption that is occurring now in the country, the kidnap for ransom done by police, the 'holiday' incidents, and what is even worse, these are done by top police officials. These types of crimes made by the police are getting worse every day. We see them on social media posted by the public, who they should protect and serve. These are some of the factors that contribute to the public's distrust of police officers. This is precisely the reason that prodded the researcher to dwell on this topic, which is relevant to his field of specialization, the science of criminology.

As criminologists and teachers of future police officers, the researchers felt obligated to conduct an in-depth study on the experiences of those victims of police misconduct, not to put a bad image on the police department but to unravel the truth that would help shed the recurring causes of the problem. Thus, it assists the police department in designing programs that would prevent the occurrence of police misconduct.

A literature search revealed that there are studies conducted about the public perception of police misconduct (Weitzer, 2004) and the causes of police brutality (Worden, 2015). Moreover, studies were also conducted on police violence and corruption, specifically in the Philippines (Jensen & Hapal, 2018). However, the researchers cannot find a study about the negative experiences of the victims of police misconduct, its impact on their lives and their families, and how they cope. From this inquiry and observation, this study will explore the lived experiences of the victims of police brutality who are residing in Cebu City to propose recommendations to address police victimization.

2. Literature Review

This study is anchored on the theory of Control Balance by Charles Tittle and supported by the Transformational Leadership theory of Bernard M. Bass and the Conflict theory of Karl Marx.

The theory of control balance theory looks to clarify not just juvenile misconduct and other road wrongdoing sorts of aberrance. However, the abnormality of intense on-screen characters is also frequently called cubicle wrongdoing or world-class abnormality. Likewise, the control adjust hypothesis additionally addresses variety in abnormality crosswise over populace totals. This theory brings forth another meaning of freak conduct and a join typology by which diverse degenerate acts can be classified by whether they are abusive or self-ruling and their earnestness inside these sorts. Aberrance is depicted as instrumental conduct that is utilized with the end goal of enhancing the performing artist's control proportion. The essence of the hypothesis is that abnormality will increment as control proportions become progressively imbalanced. This outcome is based on the impact of control proportions on other causal process factors, especially freak inspiration and requirements for degenerate acts (Tittle, 1995).

Control balance theory is based on control, which refers to how much others and their environment can restrict an individual's choices and how much they can free themselves from these restrictions to exert control over others. The theory identifies a control ratio, the balance between the control one exerts and the control one is subjected to, as the primary factor leading to deviant behavior. According to the theory, the key idea is that imbalances in the control ratio are linked to deviance because they create a mismatch between the motivation for deviant actions and the limitations on such behavior. There are two kinds of control imbalances: control deficits, where the control subjected to an individual outweighs the control they can exert, and control surpluses, where the control an individual can exert is greater than what they are subjected to, as outlined by Powers & Howley (2007).

The transformational leadership theory of Bernard M. Bass supports this study. This hypothesis states that devotees pursue a pioneer due to trust, genuineness, and different characteristics; the more grounded these are, the more prominent steadfastness they have for the pioneer. The pioneer changes the supporters in light of their having these characteristics. Not only is the pioneer a good example, but they also urge the accompanying to test the current request, the progressive being an unmistakable case of this. While the pioneer may have vote-based thought processes at the top of the priority list, they can accept a transaction leadership style while guiding the supporters to get things done. Bass saw these parts of the transformational initiative: Individual thought, where there is an accentuation on what a gathering part needs. The pioneer is a good example, guide, facilitator, or instructor to carry a devotee into the gathering and be inspired to do errands. An innovator gives scholarly incitement as a test of the overall request, errand, and person.

He looks for thoughts from the gathering and urges them to contribute, learn, and be free. The pioneer regularly turns into an educator. Motivation by a pioneer implies offering importance to the pursuit of an undertaking. This normally includes giving a

dream or objective. The gathering is given a reason or reason to complete an undertaking or even be in the association. The pioneer will turn to magnetic methodologies to urge the gathering to go ahead. Romanticized impact alludes to the pioneer turning into an undeniable good example, carrying on and showing perfect attributes of genuineness, trust, eagerness, pride, etc. (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

This study is further supported by the conflict theory of Karl Marx, a historically predominant perspective in the field of sociology. He considers how society is held together by power and coercion to benefit those in power based on social class, gender, race, or ethnicity. When examined through the lens of conflict theory, social problems arise from the inherent tension between different societal strata; the dominant sectors of society increase their power by exploiting the weak. The conflict perspective is easily and readily applied to the social problem, which is the war on drugs. Strict drug legislation and racially disproportionate enforcement serve to expand, or at least preserve, the social advantages held by the powerful (Vito et al., 2011).

Conflict theory suggests several hypotheses concerning the behavior of the police in their dealings with the citizens they are assigned to protect. In many forms of police misconduct, officers can select their victim. Citizens who find themselves victims of police misconduct tend to be those who have limited credibility and are defined as marginal by the general public. Therefore, citizens with less power and fewer resources, such as minority group members or those from a lower socioeconomic class, would be more likely to experience police misconduct. Additionally, one could argue that "marginal" citizens might also be implicated in more severe cases of police misconduct, such as the deployment of unnecessary force. Finally, in the evaluations concerning the credibility of misconduct allegations, department investigators may be less likely to sustain complaints filed by those with less power and fewer resources (Lersch, 1998).

President Duterte's war on drugs will be catastrophic. The President is doing exactly that, fighting the war on drugs with all means available. The trouble is that many of the means he is using are illegal. The Philippines are becoming a killing field. When the government abandons due process and the rule of law, the two things they are supposed to uphold more than anything else, the long-term effects will be catastrophic. First is the moral problem. A government that acts illegally is self-contradictory. It makes laws, supposedly enforces laws, but simultaneously breaks them. Breaking a set of laws will usually lead to contempt for all laws. The second is practical. The drug trade is to be deplored for several reasons, not least because it brings misery to millions of people with an addiction, but also because it represents a state within the state, a parallel jurisdiction, based not on the law as the arbiter of disputes but on brute force. The drug trade is inherently violent because it is illegal. The way to time is to legalize it (Lucie-Smith, 2016).

According to Shaw (2002), this conflict theory focuses more on the racial inequity evidenced in the unequal enforcement of harsh criminal penalties for drug violations in minority communities today, just like the rampant killings related to the war on drugs, where most victims of this killing are small-time drug sellers or pushers but not on those bigger fish.

Roberson (2016) states that police corruption abuses authority for private gain. They noted that it is among the world's oldest practices and a fundamental cause of intrastate conflict, providing a focal point for many social groups' grievances against governments. It can be equally crucial after conflict when fledgling law enforcement to build a secure, viable society after a conflict; it has faced the need to reform the institution most responsible for law enforcement, the local police force, to reduce its predatory and often pervasive corruption.

Police abuse of power warrants special scrutiny since it illustrates fundamental conflicts that arise from policing in a democratic society. Who will police the police is a perennial concern to the public and those charged with civic oversight. Given the importance of improving police and community relations, many theories have been proposed to curb the damaging behavior of the police (Pate & Fridell, 1993).

One of the most debated topics in law enforcement involves claims of police mistreatment towards minority communities. Victim's experiences of police misconduct commonly fall into this category: unjustified street stops of citizens, verbal abuse, and use of excessive force. The neighborhood context conditions residents' attitudes and reported experiences with the police to vary in racial and class profiles. Individuals living in middle-class neighborhoods, regardless of being predominantly white or black, were less inclined to report or encounter instances of police misconduct compared to those residing in lower-class black neighborhoods. This suggests that the socioeconomic status of a neighborhood plays a critical yet often overlooked role in shaping the perceptions and experiences of its residents toward the police. When interactions with police occur outside their neighborhood, however, the race of the individuals involved becomes a significant factor. Thus, it is important to consider the influence of race, socioeconomic status, and the neighborhood's context on the dynamics of police-citizen interactions to fully understand the root causes of police misconduct (Weitzer, 1999).

Reiss (1971) suggests that one of the obvious problems a reasonableness standard creates is determining the appropriate level of reasonableness. Research results have indicated that police officers, especially street officers, can assess what is good police work and when force is excessive. This might illuminate why numerous excessive force claims are rejected within the department. It is police officers who unite, form a tight circle, and defend each other against allegations of excessive force. Ultimately, it is not up to a police officer to judge the appropriateness of another officer's behavior since it is rare for police officers to serve as jurors in police misconduct cases.

Reasonableness can be understood in various degrees and by different groups of people. Nonetheless, the judgment of force by a "reasonable person" from the civilian population is significant. Additionally, the use of force can encompass hands, batons, or other tools, provided they are employed correctly in line with policies and training. Law enforcement officials are permitted to incrementally increase their use of force on a suspect, starting from their mere presence, advancing through verbal and visual directives, and, if required, culminating in the employment of lethal force directly connected to the justification for the suspect's apprehension. Courts must analyze its necessity and reasonableness to determine whether that force was justified. These terms need to be clearly defined and understood. We must establish what constitutes acceptable force and what is considered excessive in a manner relevant to real-world scenarios rather than being overly theoretical or confined to legal interpretations. The ongoing legal discussions aimed at clarifying the boundaries of what is known as officer-qualified immunity provide a foundation for the current effort to define what is considered reasonable behavior for officers in situations where force is employed (Smith, 1998).

Wittie (2011) mentioned that the use of force is a necessary part of the job of police officers. Officers will know if or when force must be applied once the situation presents itself. Preparing the officers through training in department policy and procedures, classroom instruction, and practical training in using force reduces criminal and civil liability on the officer and department in use-of-force cases. Maximizing performance and utilizing legal mandates can prepare officers to use force appropriately. Control documentation allows a department to determine if an officer is engaging in misconduct early so that the behavior can be corrected through retraining, counseling, or disciplinary action. By following these principles, law enforcement agencies can protect themselves and their officers from the many problems that can arise from using force. As long as agencies strive to prepare their officers for incidents involving the use of force, the amount of civil and criminal liability will decline. It will also begin to sway the public opinion of officers about the use of force.

Police misconduct will carry long-term effects that are difficult to restore. The media should be limited to the exploitation and description of covering issues that may disturb society. The media causes more tension between authorities and society with its exploitation. It is difficult for citizens and authorities to restore good relations because of the bad tensions between the groups. However, disobeying authorities and the laws is not the answer. Authorities need to try to repair relationships to prevent further police misconduct. Programs such as community policing have proven to have a positive relationship between communities and authorities and lower the number of police misconduct (Weitzer, 2004).

Police misconduct may also stimulate resistance by citizens, making it more difficult for authorities to fulfill their official responsibilities. If there is a certain social class or minority group that is a victim, this can lead to many negative relationships between the social class and ethnicity with authorities. An affected class or ethnicity that may encounter authorities may appear to lack self-control. They may initiate disrespect toward the police, physically resist, or refuse to obey the police. With this behavior, citizens will likely encounter police misconduct with a 35% chance (Mastrofski, 2002).

The legitimacy of a democratic state is jeopardized when police powers are exercised in an arbitrary, unlawful manner or in ways that are discriminatory towards particular social, ethnic, racial, cultural, or religious groups or when such powers are used without the community's consent or accountability. The perception of policing as illegitimate can lead to civil unrest. It is often reported that unlawful, abusive, or insensitive police conduct plays a significant role in triggering public disorder, with specific police actions frequently sparking such disturbances (Kappeler et al., 1994).

Young drug users' enmity of the police is firstly an acknowledgment of their being belligerents in a 'war on drugs' that is being waged against them. Rather than being passive victims of this war, they actively resist, using various tactics in their everyday struggle to survive. Secondly, it is brought about by the perceptions that the police are corrupt and hypocritical: a perception fueled by their personal experiences as well as what they see as collusion between the police and drug suppliers. This view of the police fuels further mistrust and feelings of injustice, which in turn further alienates the young men from the government and society at large. Overall, the study offers an ethnographic argument against the punitive measures being employed by the Philippines and other governments in the region, as well as the idea that more punitive measures will solve the "drug problem" (Lasco, 2018).

Contrary to public discourses that depict them as passive victims of both the drugs they use and the punitive measures that target them, the young men actively make use of 'tactics' or what they term 'discharge' to evade the police and negotiate their dangerous lifeworlds. However, some of them get caught, and narratives of arrest and detention also figure in their accounts, further shaping their perspectives of law enforcement and their broader outlook amid the risks and dangers they face. Much attention has been accorded to the Philippines in light of President Rodrigo Duterte's "War on Drugs" and the thousands of deaths attributed to "legitimate" police operations and "vigilante killings." Significantly, for the study on the "War on Drugs," young people have not been spared of the drug war's fatal consequences (Ateneo et al. Center, 2017).

Under Duterte, democracy has been bloodied through the systematic violation of human rights in the name of a crackdown on drugs through the impunity of the police, beginning with the elected President himself, who has encouraged and defended state violence, which has been organized by his loyal friend and former Davao police chief whom he appointed to run the national police. The precedent for such bloody rule was set during Duterte's days as Davao mayor or its informal leader (through his family dynasty) for a generation following the fall of Marcos. However, Duterte is a distinctive kind of warlord politician. Instead of fighting his political enemies, he focused his wrath and firepower on drug criminals, allowing him to cut deals with communist insurgents and make peace with surrounding political bosses. It also made him enormously popular in Davao as a "law and order" mayor who showed he meant business by ordering criminals to be killed en masse. Duterte now promises national political salvation by claiming that, given weak institutions, only violent strongman rule can bring political order to the country (Thompson, 2016).

Since being inaugurated as the 16th president of the Philippines in June 2016, Rodrigo Duterte has consistently been a significant subject of global news coverage. Despite facing significant criticism both domestically and internationally, he appears determined to lead his nation along a new, perilous path marked by lawlessness and violence. The President's relentless campaign to eliminate drugs in the country has resulted in a rapidly rising number of deaths occurring daily. A little more than six months into the presidency of Rodrigo Duterte, records show that his anti-drug war campaign has resulted in over 7,000 deaths or an average of more than 30 people summarily executed in extrajudicial fashion every day. The populist President, while otherwise hypersensitive to criticism, remains unfazed by almost universal condemnation by the international community over the extrajudicial killings in the country. However, the majority of the Filipino people remain silent, preferring to continue their quiet, anonymous existence, while watching horrified and ashamed as the rabid mob who so proudly put him in office cheered what was previously considered unethical, uncouth, unprofessional, illegal, and immoral. A single man has transformed the country into a nation that condones the killing of innocent lives, one that rejoices in the erosion of its moral and democratic ideals, insults and silences dissent and intellectual discourse, disregards the rule of law and turns a blind eye to human rights abuses, ignores the lessons of history, one that glorifies and rewards a dictator, plunderer, and human rights violator. It has sadly come to this. Still, people remain silent, passive spectators guilty of active complicity (Bautista, 2017).

According to Simangan (2018), Duterte's "war on drugs" scopes are existing news articles, government briefings, public speeches, and available drug-related statistics. Duterte's "war on drugs" is a textbook case of what the processes of genocide look like. Drug suspects in the Philippines are classified as "bad" and labeled as criminals through symbolism. Duterte, his administration, and his supporters believe that drug suspects are not human or less human than them. As it is a state-sanctioned policy, the "war on drugs" is highly organized, with both state and non-state actors participating in anti-drug operations. This drug war is also polarizing, with one side of the debate wanting to get rid of drug suspects by whatever means possible and the other side wanting to protect their human rights. Duterte's administration has created enforcement programs, mobilized police and military apparatuses, and silenced or threatened political critics to efficiently exterminate drug suspects. He has also encouraged civilians to participate not just in reporting drug suspects but also in shooting them.

Duterte is happy to slaughter millions of drug suspects, likening himself to Hitler. He has ordered "shoot-to-kill" operations and assured officers involved in these operations of his support and protection. Duterte justifies his policies using a rhetoric of fear, hatred, and paranoia to deny accountability for the deaths from his "war on drugs." Police officers in anti-drug operations eliminate evidence that drug suspects were unarmed and compliant. Due to this state-sponsored violence, witnesses and family members are intimidated out of speaking for the victims. Duterte and his administration continue to block independent investigations and threaten critics of his policies while putting people into positions of power Duterte feels indebted to despite their lack of qualifications and experience. Considering all these factors, Duterte's "war on drugs" satisfies the stages of genocide, as Stanton (2013) describes them. It may not fully meet the legal definition of genocide, but it has the characteristics found in stages of classification, symbolization, dehumanization, organization, polarization, preparation, extermination, and denial. This approach departs from limiting genocide to its legalistic definition and considers a more contextual analysis of what constitutes an act of genocide (Simangan, 2018).

The Internal Affairs Service of the Philippine National Police, as provided by Republic Act No. 8851, conducts the following functions and powers: inspect and audit the PNP personnel and units, investigate complaints and gather evidence in support of an open

investigation, conduct summary hearings on the PNP members facing administrative charges, submit a periodic report on the assessment, analysis and evaluation of the character and behavior of the PNP personnel and units to the Chief of the PNP and the National Police Commission, file appropriate criminal cases against PNP members before the court as evidence warrants and assist in the prosecution of the case and provide assistance to the office of the ombudsman in cases involving the personnel of the PNP. It automatically investigates the following cases: the discharges of firearms by police personnel, human rights violations, the death and physical injuries of the police during operation, loss of evidence while in the custody of the police, and violation of the rules of engagement (Manolo, 2003).

People empowerment as a strategy in the administration of the police administrative disciplinary system finds actualization with the organization and operation of the People's Law Enforcement Boards (PLEBs) in the cities and municipalities throughout the country. Under R.A. No. 6975, the PLEBs are vested with the jurisdiction to hear and decide citizens' complaints against erring personnel filed before them. The intent of the law is clear. In the governance over the police, local government units and the community must have substantial and more meaningful participation, particularly in discipline. The regional executives appoint PLEB members based on recommendations from the local Peace and Order Councils. In 1995, a total of 1,510 PLEBs were organized nationwide. PLEB members are given the appropriate training upon appointment. Of the total number of PLEBs organized, 1,087 PLEBs were monitored to determine their caseload and status of case disposition, as well as to look into their technical or legal capabilities and requirements. Around 1,919 complaints against PNP members were filed with the various PLEBs. Of this number, 824 were disposed of, registering a 42.9 percent case disposition rate (Caparas, 2000).

The establishment of the Women's and Children's Concern Desks in police stations is expected to streamline further and strengthen the efforts of the police in responding to problems of violence against women and children. As a management strategy, policewomen are assigned to man the desks; if no female personnel are available, a trained male police officer is assigned. 1,632 WCCDs with 1,763 personnel (1,468 policewomen and 294 police officers) have been established nationwide. The WCCD investigates cases of women and children in highly urbanized cities. A total of 3,463 cases of abused women and children have been reported to WCCD and acted upon appropriately. WCCP officers have been effective tools in providing services to women and children in close coordination with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and concerned women-based NGOs. Aside from these flagship programs, the police also conduct their own public information and education programs through several T.V. and radio programs. They likewise conduct regular "Ugnayans" or dialogue with the community and hold a "People's Day" every month. These activities make police services accessible to the public (Caparas, 2000).

According to Tabucanon et al. (2008), Presidential Decree No. 1508, or the Katarungang Pambarangay Law, established a system of amicably settling disputes at the barangay level. The system aims to strengthen the family as a basic social institution, preserve and develop Filipino culture, and promote the quality and speedy administration of justice that the courts dispense. The essence of Katarungang Pambarangay (K.P.) is embodied in two salient features of the law. One is that it makes the barangay settlement compulsory and a prerequisite to bringing suits in regular courts of justice or before any governmental office exercising adjudicative functions. As a community-based conflict resolution mechanism, the K.P. has proven effective in perpetuating the time-honored Filipino tradition of settling interpersonal disputes amicably without resorting to confrontational social behavior. Moreover, while central to the concerns of the K.P. is the speedy administration of justice, people empowerment is of prime significance over time and, therefore, highly supportive of social ordering and human development.

The Philippine Barangay Justice system exemplifies the personal-oriented approach to dispensing justice within a faster and shorter time frame, with less rigor and cheaper costs. Its performance for more than fifteen years shows that it is one sure mechanism for diverting cases of petty crimes and civil cases from the judicial system. The amicable settlements of disputes intend to bury the rancor and bitterness between the parties and ensure the preservation of a closer personal relationship within the barangay. There are 41,000 barangays in the country, with a total number of 780,000 mediators (Lupong et al.). The system has contributed to improving the administration of justice, specifically the problem of poor people having limited access to the higher courts (Tabucanon et al., 2008).

One of how the ideals of policing mirror democratic governance is the role played by citizens in dealing with matters relating to police accountability. While many Western developed democracies have mechanisms for civilian oversight of police that include an active citizen role, the extent to which citizen oversight exists in new and emerging democracies is unclear. Nearly all Asian democracies have some form of oversight in the form of human rights commissions, ombudsmen, or anti-corruption bureaus, but only 3 out of 24 Asian countries have civilian oversight. Of the two full democracies, Japan and South Korea, only one country has civilian oversight of police (South Korea), which was recently established in August 2012. In this range of oversight mechanisms, countries that include citizens represent a higher degree of democratic governance, as direct citizen participation in establishing checks and balances is consistent with the larger ideals of citizen involvement in democratic governance (Nalla & Mamayek, 2013).

The study of organizational behavior and performance is often linked to organizational leadership. The police force, as civilians, is mandated to maintain peace and order in the community and is expected to effectively and efficiently control crime. Short to meet the mandate calls for a study of police leadership. The performance of the police officers as a group depends greatly on the leadership skills of its Chief of Police (COP). Better police performance is, first and foremost, an attribute of a skilled police chief. Leadership is vital to a performing police officer. Thus, "managerial competence" and "decision-making ability" are important domains of leadership that must always be part of the professional growth and development of the COP. The dichotomy between the two domains must remain at bay. In comparison, training and education programs are instituted at the level of the two leadership domains, thereby considerably improving the performance of the police offices (Eduardo & Gabriel, 2017).

According to Pajarillo-Guadamor (2016) in his study, the highest frequency among uniformed personnel who committed infractions was 21 – 30 years old. This implies that the PNP's recruitment policy needs to be improved. Therefore, it shows that in all types of crimes, uniformed personnel of the area of study have been accused of committing various crimes, ranging from neglect of duty to the most serious crimes, such as crimes against persons and properties, chastity, and other serious crimes.

Special Action Forces of the Philippine National Police stormed an attempted jailbreak in a maximum security detention center in Bicutan, Taguig City, Philippines, on March 15, 2005. This warrants the investigation conducted by the Commission on Human Rights and the Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates. Three possible justifications emerge to explain the death of 23 detainees and a member of the national police: (1) incompetence of prison and police personnel; (2) a breakdown of administrative control over the police assault team; and (3) a premeditated and concerted effort to eliminate identified enemies of the state. It was found that the third option is the most credible, which is bolstered by the government's meager response to explain the massacre and by failing to adopt measures proposed by the Philippine Commission on Human Rights. Policies and guidelines were implemented to preserve human rights, and the rule of law within the context of a crisis, especially with terrorists, deserves more focus by scholars. As the global war on terrorism continues unaudited, the militarized police use of force at Bicutan serves as a reference point for future scholars and analysts (Reyes & Vaughn, 2009).

Albrecht (2017) stated that police corruption involves situations when police officers lose integrity in their professional actions and accept benefits or rewards in exchange for violating their mandated responsibilities. The use of excessive force involves engaging in menacing (i.e., threatening with a weapon) actions, assault, battery, and perhaps murder when it is not legally justified while acting in the capacity of a police professional. Abuse of authority involves violating the legal mandate of the police position.

Beggs and Davies (2009) mentioned that police regulation is most readily understood at the level of failures by individual police officers. There are different regulations to address misconduct and performance, which are considered prevalent problems in policing. Necessarily, however, there are layers of regulation above these, which are directed at controlling the conduct and performance of police forces and those who act as chief officers of individual police forces. This involves considering efficiency and effectiveness and setting and achieving strategic priorities.

Holmes and Smith (2008) stated that police brutality is a tragic yet profoundly normal by-product of intergroup relations. Physical aggression by the police, when unjustified, legally constitutes police brutality. It strikes at the heart of the most cherished principles of democratic societies. At the same time, police brutality has broader implications when speaking more generally to police minority relations. Less directly injurious forms of aggression, such as verbal insults, also undermine the legitimacy of police brutality.

Rondina (2018) states that the "Galatea effect" is a self-fulfillment prophecy. Police officers in the Davao Region strongly adhere to the virtues and values of obedience, professionalism, morality, justice, and fairness. Moreover, their sense of good service stems from their strict obedience to the chain of command. Thus, a good police force is a result of quality police leadership. It is also good to know that younger members of the force exemplify deep respect for their uniform. With that, values formation will significantly impact younger members of the men in uniform. These young idealistic men will later assume leadership with accountability, professionalism, and respect. Finally, the study proved the "galatea effect" among policemen in Davao City, who are expected to show virtues and values of good citizenship while simultaneously being the peace and order officers of the state. In many societies, it is difficult for a woman to report violence and pursue legal action because of the following reasons: fear for her safety and the safety of her children; fear that her children will be apprehended or taken away by the husband; the influence of her extended family, emotional attachment and loyalty to the abuser; low self-esteem and self-blame; religious values or pressure from the cultural community; economic dependency on the abuser; and lack of legal information about their rights and laws. On the other hand, authorities are one of the factors why abused women do not report the crime. Some people think police action is always characterized by distrust and tension (Sadusky, 2001).

Republic Act 9262, the Anti-Violence Against Women and Children Act of 2004, penalizes the commission of Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC). It defines VAWC as any act or series of acts committed by any person against a woman who is his wife or former wife, with whom the person has had a sexual dating relationship, or with whom he has had a common child. Additionally, it provides for penalties for violence committed against his child, whether legitimate or illegitimate, within or without the family abode, which results in (or is likely to result in) physical or psychological harm or suffering. Also, economic abuses, including threats of such acts, battery, assault, coercion, harassment, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, are penalized. Among others, it provides for the security of the complainant and her family through the protection orders from the barangay and court. Furthermore, it recognizes Battered Woman Syndrome (BWS), which refers to a scientifically defined pattern of psychological or behavioral symptoms found in women living in abusive relationships as a result of cumulative abuse, as an acceptable defense for actions committed by a victim as a result of battering. On the other hand, violence against women is any act of gender-based violence that results in or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life (Legaspi, 2015).

De Guzman (2008) explores how various nations have sought to manage police forces effectively by implementing civilian oversight committees. The Philippines has embraced this model by forming the People's Law Enforcement Board (PLEB). This initiative is designed to engage citizens in overseeing police activities. The research evaluates the board's integrity, legitimacy, and effectiveness and measures how satisfied complainants are with the board's processes. The findings indicate that complainants are overwhelmingly satisfied with the People's Law Enforcement Board, expressing significant appreciation for the board's legitimacy and the prompt resolution of cases.

With all the theories and related literature, this research aims to look into the issues involving misbehavior or misconduct among the members of the Philippine National Police (PNP) in the course of their operations or performance of their functions. As a component of the Philippine Criminal Justice System (PCJS), the police, like any other public officers, are prone to commit excesses or abuses of their authority, resulting in malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance. In this study, the researcher wanted to explore and understand beyond the revelation of negative experiences of victims, how they cope with their experience, and the impact of this experience on their lives and on their families.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This research utilized a qualitative research methodology supported by the use of questionnaires to inquire about the informant's views on the lived experiences of the victims of police misconduct by the participants regarding the impact and treatment of the victims of police misconduct.

Phenomenology is recognized as the appropriate approach to this present study as it focuses on human phenomena and their importance, especially in criminology as a field of discipline. Given that this involves a qualitative examination of narrative data, the techniques used to analyze this data must differ markedly from the conventional or quantitative research methodologies. Essentially, you are focused on the meaning of the experience, behavior, and narrative (Paley, 2016).

According to Boeije (2009), phenomenology can be viewed as a philosophical perspective and a qualitative research approach with a rich tradition across various disciplines such as psychology, sociology, and social work. This school of thought prioritizes exploring individuals' subjective experiences and how they interpret the world around them. The phenomenologist aims to grasp how others perceive the world. Phenomenological approaches excel in highlighting individual experiences and viewpoints from their context, thereby questioning established or normative beliefs. Incorporating an interpretive aspect into phenomenological studies can serve as a foundation for practical theories, influencing, reinforcing, or critiquing policies and actions.

3.2 Research Participants

This research was conducted in Cebu City, Central Philippines. Ten key participants were purposively chosen for this study. Four participants were individually interviewed (ID), and six participants were also gathered in one venue for the Focus Group Discussion (FGD). These participants have their experiences and firsthand knowledge of police misconduct and have reported their victimization to the proper authorities like IAS, PLEB, NAPOLCOM, and the Commission on Human Rights. The participants were asked to share their negative experiences, coping mechanisms, and the impact of these experiences on their lives and families.

3.3 Research Instruments

In gathering data, the researchers employed a self-made-panel-approached interview guide. The guide for the interview was verified and approved by specialists. The researchers used field notes and a voice recorder to document the participants' responses accurately.

3.4 Data Collection

Before the interview, transmittal letters were sent to authorities like IAS, PLEB, NAPOLCOM, and the Commission on Human Rights. However, all of these mentioned offices declined the approval of the giving the personal information of the victims who filed a case against the police who used unlawful force or conduct unbecoming of a law enforcer with the basis that all of this information was considered to be classified and should at all times be confidential. Modesty aside, the former CHR director, who happens to be the researcher's co-faculty instructor, indirectly provided me with personal information and contact numbers of victims of police misconduct, which shed light on the realization of this study.

The researchers explained the purpose of the study to the participants. They informed them of the participant's/participants' rights and the researcher's obligations before and after the study. The researchers allowed the participants to select a comfortable venue to be at ease and get honest responses to the questions. After the in-depth interview of the participants, transcriptions of the recorded responses were made using English translation.

This research study combines individual interviews and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Researchers commonly select individual interviews as the primary method for gathering data in qualitative studies. This approach is preferred to elicit comprehensive insights into the participants' perceptions, opinions, beliefs, and understanding of a particular subject matter. This approach assumes that if questions are formulated correctly, participants' experiences will reflect their reality. Thus, individual interviews contribute in-depth data, and the assumption that words accurately indicate participants' inner experiences may need to be revised. Interview participants might omit specific details or enhance them, especially if the 'reality' does not align with how they see themselves or if they aim to make a favorable impression on the interviewer. Such considerations raise the issue of whether interviewee-interviewer characteristics (e.g., demographics) should, at times, be matched. Additionally, while interviewers might aim to maintain an impartial stance, they can unintentionally show a bias towards a specific viewpoint, potentially skewing the results (Lambert et al., 2008).

Globally, researchers employ focus groups to investigate various phenomena from another perspective. This approach mainly aims to leverage data from interactions, such as questions and comments among participants, to deepen the investigation and reveal dimensions of the subject matter that might need to be more readily apparent. Interactions within the group can highlight the commonalities and distinctions among members, providing information on the diversity of viewpoints and experiences. Unfortunately, they frequently serve as a 'low-cost' alternative to personal interviews, and the discussions within the group are examined for the substance of 'individual' conversations. Enhanced focus on analyzing interactions and the distinct understandings gained through this approach is essential for fully leveraging the method's capabilities. Suppose we consider focus groups as a 'social space,' wherein participants shape their experiences through the progression of the discussion and their interactions with each other. In such instances, acquiring an extra layer of information could lead to analytical inquiries to understand the dynamics of group interactions (Morse, 2003).

3.5 Data Analysis

Data collection from the participants will be conducted using thematic analysis, a prevalent method in qualitative research. This approach focuses on identifying, exploring, and documenting patterns (or themes) within the data. These themes are significant patterns that emerge across data sets, crucial for explaining a phenomenon and related to a particular research question. The themes become the categories for analysis. Thematic analysis is performed through coding in six phases to create established, meaningful patterns. The stages encompass getting acquainted with the data, identifying patterns within the codes, evaluating these patterns, characterizing and labeling the patterns, and compiling the conclusive report.

Thematic content analyses were utilized to analyze and cluster interview answers in common themes for interpretation. This study systematically reviewed the interview responses to identify distinct, significant themes related to specific categories. The research uncovered meaningful messages inherent in the content by examining and analyzing the content derived from the interviews. Thematic code analysis was used to inspect themes that emerged during the analysis of interviews to gauge the frequency of themes and similarities between users in the use of themes.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Confidentiality will be maintained for the identified participants, and permission will be sought from them before conducting the interviews. The researchers also complied with the research policy, namely the informed consent form, before researching the participants' activities.

4. Results and Discussion

The data gathered was thoroughly read to obtain a feeling for the description of the experiences of the Participants. Significant statements about the research phenomena were extracted from the informant's transcripts. Formulated meanings were

constructed from the substantial statements and arranged into clusters. Cluster themes were then re-grouped, which evolved into emergent themes.

4.1 Negative experiences of the Participants on police misconduct

This research question seeks to gather insights from participants regarding their emotions, opinions, and experiences related to police misconduct. Incidents of police misconduct that receive a lot of media attention not only harm the victims but also negatively affect how the public views the police force as a whole. However, the proper authority has yet to investigate the yet-to-bend longevity of such effects. The data gathered was thoroughly read to obtain a feeling for the description of the experiences of the Participants. Significant statements about the research phenomena were extracted from the informant's transcripts. Formulated meanings were constructed from the substantial statements and arranged into clusters. Cluster themes were then re-grouped, which evolved into emergent themes.

4.1.1 Sadists in Uniform: A Deep Threat

This theme narrates the negative experience of the participants regarding police misconduct. The abuse of authority is caused by the application of excessive force by law enforcement while performing their duties. The Participant's experience is expressly applied in the context of causing physical harm and psychological harm through the use of tactics beyond the scope of police authority.

It was very painful on my part to admit the crime. I do not know, sir, even if you would subject me to torture; I do not know anything like that, sir, so they hit me in my stomach many times while doing it. They kept asking me who my boss was, which was very painful. (Participant 2).

I hold my outrage because the police stole my income as a barker; I wonder why they act like that; it's unlikely as a police officer, and they act unprofessional. (Participant 8)

The control balance theory underpinned the theme, which identifies six fundamental forms of deviance. These range from predation, defiance, and submissiveness at one end of the control ratio spectrum to exploitation, plunder, and decadence at the opposite end. Control balance theory represents a progression, or a temporary peak, of the collaborative work of scholars in the field of crime and deviance, offering itself as a means to attain a comprehensive, overarching theory of deviance, as discussed by Braithwaite in 1997.

According to Piquero & Hickman (2003) they understand how the control balance theory could account for victimization. Then, the purpose of measuring control ratios and victimization experiences leads to the experiences of the Participants clearly establishing control imbalances predicted victimization. The results from segmented, nonlinear regression analysis showed that control surpluses and control deficits positively correlated with the likelihood of general and predictive victimization. This relationship remained significant, even considering regular lifestyle habits and demographic variables.

4.1.2 Bill of Rights: Gone with the Wind

Basic in the principle of law, all people are clothed with all the rights granted under the constitution and shall at all times be given the disputable presumption of self-incrimination and innocence. These rights must not be interpreted in a way that denies or belittles individuals based on their status, gender, or marital status and must not be infringed upon by anyone, particularly those in law enforcement.

I was so nervous and angry. It was a mixed emotion, sir; I was shocked and angry because they accused me of a crime that I did not commit—dismayed to the police because of the belief that they are in charge of protecting people who are being abused and assaulted by someone. However, the police now are haphazardly accusing me of the said crime. (Participant 2)

I was afraid and shocked because one of the police officers asked where the drugs were hidden, which I did not know. Some police officers search our personal effects, including my wallet. (Participant 6).

This theme supports the conflict theory, which asserts that particular segments of society benefit disproportionately from established social and economic arrangements. This leads them to employ the state's coercive force to maintain inequality in terms of due process of law and appreciation of civil rights. Though this conception of power and disadvantage was originally a purely economic perspective, racial and ethnic identities have become integral to conflict theory hypotheses as they are defined and discussed today. This reflects that race, poverty, and crime are inextricably linked within society, and examining this broader picture of inequality is a crucial step toward fully understanding the repressive ends for which state power may be exerted (Snyder, 2013).

Sutton (2009) mentioned that the primary duty of a police officer is to serve and protect. The phrase "serve and protect" is common in the philosophy of many law enforcement agencies. They make arrests that deter illegal and dangerous behavior from protecting them in their communities.

4.2 Coping with their experiences of police misconduct

If there are negative experiences in police misconduct, next to that is how Participants cope with their experiences and how they proceed with their daily ventures in life. The following themes were created.

4.2.1 Keeping in Silence the Outcry for Justice

This theme explains how the Participants handle their undesirable experiences and how they cope with their problems. This is based on the popular knowledge that if they think they can get away with it, police officers will retaliate against those who dare report them for brutality, verbal abuse, or any form of misconduct. These officers have been known to threaten people, rob people, arrest them for nothing, and sometimes even harm them physically.

We should report this to the proper authorities; then I told my mother just to forget it because they had already threatened me that they would kill me if they ever saw me again. Worse of that is, if we report this, all of us in the family might be assaulted. I did not even commit the crime; modesty aside, they did not bring me to the police station because they could not find evidence. (Participant 1).

I intend to forget about it because I've tried to go to the barangay, but people there have not even worked or talked about it; it's very hard for us to be in this situation. (Participant 5).

This theme explains that Participants are eager to file a case against law enforcement; however, they are hampered by fear of something that might happen to them. As the prime mover of peace and order in the community, it is a must to respect the rights of every person. Authorities should serve as role models of discipline for everyone, not violators. They must protect the constitution without resorting to violation of human rights. Certain forms of police abuse are considered to be among the most serious human rights violations. Police misconduct has reared its ugly head in cities several times ever since, and this is relative to abuse of authority, where victims often come from the marginal group of the community. In this study, I observed, based on the responses of the Participant's police officers, that rarely abused persons come from well-off families, and that's why victims of this misconduct done by law enforcers most of the time come from slum areas or individuals who are living in squatter. The victims themselves wanted to forget their experience because they were afraid of retaliation or any future misconduct done by law enforcers.

According to Albert Bandura's social learning theory, variables play a role in initiating and reinforcing attitudes related to social behavior. The balance of these influences determines whether one will be prone to conforming or deviant behavior. The central variable in social learning theory is the influence of those with whom one associate frequently and argues that individuals develop favorable or unfavorable definitions of deviance in interactions with their peers. These definitions are then reinforced, positively or negatively, by the real or perceived rewards or punishments that follow their behavior. Additionally, peers provide models of behavior to follow. Social learning theory's focus has tended to be on explaining crime and delinquency more generally and some police misconduct in particular (Akers, 1998).

4.2.2 Forgetting the Pain and Moving on

Based on the Participants' responses, the researchers created this theme reflecting on their coping with the negative experiences where authorities are not concerned with protecting the weak but rather more on law enforcement with an iron fist without regard to human rights.

All I do is pray and pray for the police officers who did all those things to me and be thankful that they did not plant any incriminating evidence and put me behind bars, or else I would be in prison now. (Participant 2).

I am happy about the bad things they said, to forget the sorrow and nervousness they instilled in me. I talked to my friends, and that's all. I moved forward. (Participant 8).

This theme centers on the idea that to proceed in life is to forget the unimaginable experience. Law enforcement is a unique occupation with features that contribute to the opportunity for deviant behavior. The phrase "excessive force" refers to the use of force that goes beyond what is considered reasonable and necessary, given the situation an officer faces when attempting to arrest or capture a suspect. Police officers are allowed by law to use force only when necessary and only to the extent required to perform their duty. However, police officers often succumb to their authority, which is why abuse is inevitable as part of the performance

of their duties. In this study, I have noticed that police victimization runs deeper every time a victim sees a man in uniform, which always reminds them of how cruel police officers are when it comes to the use of force.

According to conflict theorists, the police, as the social control agents of the state, are concerned not only with crime and its prevention but also with the surveillance, manipulation, and coercion of subordinate groups in society. Conflict theorists focus on the great disparity in the distribution of power and resources today; these inequalities may exist along race, class, or gender. According to critical theorists, the societal structure of this country is marked by constant conflict between the "haves" and the "have-nots." Those groups with control over various important societal resources, such as wealth and income, private property (which may generate further wealth), the police, and the law, use their position to exploit and dominate less powerful groups (Lersch, 1998).

4.3 Impact of police misconduct to the lives of the Participants and their families

This pertains to how the negative experience affects the lives of the Participants and their families. The impact of such misconduct may be physical or psychological, and the victims can feel the effects of this abuse for a lifetime. These effects do not only amount to physical wounds but also psychological damage. In some cases, the community also experiences the impact of police brutality on its victims. There were two themes created as follows :

4.3.1 On the Verge of Distrust and Loss of Confidence

This theme depicts the impact of police misconduct experienced by the Participants towards the authorities, where Participants felt they lost trust and confidence in the police.

I was very discouraged by the police officers today, sir. I feel tormented by the things they did to me, and it was so painful. I could remember it as the saddest part of my life. I was accused of a crime. (Participant 2).

My trust had dwindled, trying to think if it was good. I'm a woman, yet they slap me in my face because they could not find any drugs in me. (Participant 6).

The issue of police-community relations has focused almost exclusively on racial and ethnic minority communities and governments at all levels. This loss of trust and confidence comes in different forms, like brutality, misbehavior, unbecoming conduct, grave abuse of discretion, and cruelty. It mirrors how unruly police officers are because the administration gives them importance, and this favor does not provide a positive outlook on the police but rather more negative feedback on the part of the community they serve.

This theme contradicts the transformational leadership theory of Bernard Bass; isolating the police from the political environment and the general public has resulted in an atmosphere of mistrust and misunderstanding. Transformational leadership can only work when and if the police chief or commissioner adopts a holistic approach that brings together the department's vision, goals, and development. Police organizations must have effective executive leadership if they are to change the ways they function. The chief's potential to direct the department will only be realized if the right person is chosen. The head of law enforcement can set an atmosphere conducive to meeting the needs of the public. The police executive cannot be of the same old mindset that fosters concepts reminiscent of the military style of organizational control and governance. The hierarchical structure of police organizations makes it difficult to change the cultural perspective of a "we versus them" mentality. But change is necessary. If changes are to succeed, all the stakeholders must agree to them, and the organization's leaders must implement them (Johnson & COX, 2004).

4.3.2 Not Being Protected but Disparaged and Prosecuted

This theme explains the controversies of the police in performing their duty, like arrest, search, and seizure. This pertains to grave abuse of discretion, excessive use of force, and threats used by law enforcers in the enforcement of law, which desecrate the sworn duty to protect the people.

Some police officers now could be better because they are not concerned about investigating the allegation made by someone. They should use their authority to properly apply the law and not to haphazardly incriminate someone of a crime just because someone put forth a complaint that they are aggressive to arrest. (Participant 1).

I have no faith in them; spotting a pusher and a user is so obvious. Imagine if you wanted to enter a house, you had to knock and not open it by kicking the door. They are professionals, yet they are reckless. They have rank and position; we are just ordinary individuals, and that's why my faith in them is already lost. (Participant 5).

This theme focuses on the misconduct practices made by the police in the performance of their duty, like incriminating civilians instead of protecting the community from harm. In general, citizen complaints have been used to measure multiple concepts, including police misconduct, police-citizen relations, and police productivity. It has been observed that most active police officers are more likely to receive complaints, whether they are participating in misconduct or not, because of the broader scope of their work. It is also noticeable in this study that victims of police misconduct are more likely to be subject to incriminating evidence and torture for failure to submit themselves during search and seizure of any kind. This becomes more ugly when the police find nothing during the search and seizure. They used force and even persecuted bystanders who were watching. This greatly affects the image of the police and a feeling of presumption of guilt instead of the rule of law, which is a presumption of innocence.

The impacts on violent police behavior, as well as the connection between police violence and official corruption, greatly influence the civilian's assessment of how effective the police department is. The effectiveness of criminal and civil courts, civic administrations, civilian review boards, internal controls, external auditors, and pressure from international human rights organizations in deterring police violence. The city's social order reproduces how criminal matters are patrolled and investigated. When citizens have little confidence in their government and do not participate in it or look at it for protection, they turn to violent self-help. When their sense of powerlessness is combined with an increased fear of crime, they are more willing to lend their public support to extra-legal violence by the police. Conversely, persistent government action against crime, including accountability for police violence, discourages vigilantism and official violence (Chevigny & Chevigny, 1995).

5. Conclusion

Six (6) emergent themes were derived from the participants' responses. From the inquiry's findings, the following recommendations, suggestions, and measures for implementation may be useful.

Commission on Human Rights must get support from the non-government and private sectors to build rapport and connection and expedite the investigation of cases involving uniform personnel. Being the instrumentality of the government in checking and balancing the grave abuse of discretion exercised by police personnel, they should be prompt in their solutions and recommend proper disciplinary action against erring police.

Philippine National Police (PNP) must revisit their police operational procedure as part of pre and post-briefing before conducting search and seizure. They must implement the law impartially to maintain trust and confidence in the community. Always respect the constitutional rights of every individual. Community improvement initiatives and alternative non-criminal penalties consistently demonstrate to be more cost-effective and successful than criminalizing and imprisoning individuals.

National Police Commission must bolster its role as a community and service-oriented agency involving local executives, the Philippine National Police, and the community. Adopt effective mechanisms for better partnership, ensure assistance and support to the Integrated Area/Community Public Safety Plan (IA/CPSP), formulate a three-year term-based Peace and Order Public Safety Plan (POPS Plan), and Convene the Peace and Order Council to review, update and approve the IA/CPSP to supervise the City/Municipal POC.

Internal Affairs Services (IAS), the internal disciplinary body within the PNP organization, should be given more authority to weed out bad elements of the police force. Although conceived to be part of the PNP, it was envisioned to be an independent unit with the mandate of exercising disciplinary authority over members of the PNP. However, as presently constituted, the IAS has no authority to impose disciplinary sanctions against erring PNP personnel. The authority of the IAS is limited in making recommendations, which are subject to the review and approval of the PNP chief or the PNP regional directors.

The People's Law Enforcement Board ought to undertake initiatives, recognizing its authority and role to listen to and make decisions on all complaints from citizens officially submitted to or directed at it against any uniformed member of the PNP and, if justified, apply the appropriate punishment.

The community must also help the government solve crimes since they are commonly victims or witnesses. They must report any suspicious person in their barangay better to achieve peace and order in the community.

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