



On Crimes and their Prevention: Stories of Chiefs of Police in their Anti-Criminality Programs

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Abstract

A crucial component of a community's overall development is its anti-criminality program. Its effectiveness fosters a sense of safety and security within communities. However, as many countries still face challenges with their economic and national growth, establishing peace and order remains quite challenging. Hence, this study explored the lived experiences of city police chiefs in Leyte Island, focusing on their experiences, strategies, and aspirations. Using a transcendental phenomenological design, ten city police chiefs with at least two years of experience were purposively selected and interviewed using a semi-structured interview questionnaire. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's framework. Findings revealed that collaboration among stakeholders and the promotion of transparency and accountability were critical to the program success. However, challenges such as limited resources and administrative indifference hindered effective implementation. In response, the informants employed innovative strategies and capacity-building initiatives to empower stakeholders. The participants also expressed aspirations for a technology-driven policing and sustained community support. The study recommends improved resource allocation, enhanced workforce distribution, strengthened accountability mechanisms, and expanded community engagement. These findings contribute to the development of context-sensitive anti-criminality programs and provide insights for policymakers and law enforcement practitioners.

Keywords: anti-criminality programs, Chiefs of Police, police leadership, community policing, transparency and accountability, stakeholder collaboration, transcendental phenomenological design



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INTRODUCTION

An anti-criminality program is any effort to deter and prevent criminal activity within a community. It is a crucial component of a community's overall development. To be effective, such a program relies on stakeholder collaboration, community involvement, law enforcement, and crime prevention as essential elements. These initiatives can take the form of national-level programs or community-based efforts at the regional level.

Accordingly, effective anti-criminality programs typically make communities feel safe and secure, which promotes a more engaged and economically active population. Zaldarriaga (2023) asserts that businesses directly benefit from peace and order. Thus, most agree that

business opportunities typically arise in areas with stable peace and order.

Therefore, maintaining peace, public order, and community protection is essential to ensuring people live orderly lives and protecting the nation's population. There should be anti-criminality programs in place that advance the community's best interests. However, as many countries still face challenges with their economic and national growth, establishing peace and order remains quite challenging.

It is argued that many of the most serious crime problems are prevalent in developing countries. Aside from ordinary volume crimes, these countries face the deleterious effects of transnational and organized crimes (Natarajan, 2016). Thus, to further mutual coordination,

cooperation, aid, and the sharing of resources and information on anti-criminality initiatives, various countries established organizations and offices, including the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL). Existing statutes and international regulations also provide a universal framework for human rights and conflict resolution, among other areas.

In the Philippines, criminality remains a national issue. Despite a significant decline in the documented instances of drug misuse and drug-related criminal activities few years ago, Filipinos remain apprehensive due to its reappearance, notwithstanding the government's assurances of a non-violent approach to the war on drugs. Cybercrime incidents in the nation surged by 400% in 2023 (Bautista, 2023). In 2022, approximately 379,500 criminal occurrences were reported in the Philippines, representing a marginal increase from the previous year where the Philippine National Police (PNP) documented the most significant incident of criminal activity in the National Capital Region (NCR). In 2021, the crime rate in the Philippines was approximately 37.73, lower than the rate in the preceding year (Statista, 2024).

The Eastern Visayas region, particularly in Leyte Island, also shares the same predicament. The community's unwavering support and cooperation in crime prevention, as well as the reporting of any illegal activities and lawless elements in the region, have resulted in a decrease in crime incidents from January to February 2023 compared to the same period in 2022. However, violent killings in Leyte Island have been on the rise during the first quarter of 2024, including crimes committed in cyberspace (Reyes, 2023). Therefore, despite a decrease in the number of crimes, criminality in the region remains a significant issue.

Multiple studies have been conducted regarding crime situation and program implementation in the Philippines. For instance, Patalinghug (2017) indicated a notable connection between the crime prevention strategies implemented and the index crime rate. In a similar vein, Galabin

et al. (2021) conducted a study that revealed a noteworthy connection between the frequency of police operations and the crime rate, encompassing both index and non-index crimes. In terms of community peace and order, as well as public safety, Nicor-Mangilimutan et al. (2020) identified an outstanding level of implementation; nonetheless, significant differences were noted among barangays categorized by various variables.

Despite these extensive studies on crime prevention strategies, limited research has examined the personal narratives of police chiefs as primary implementers of anti-criminality programs, particularly in localized Philippine contexts. Hence, the main objective of this study is to explore the lived experiences of city police chiefs in their implementation of an anti-criminality program in Leyte Island. Specifically, this study sought to capture the following: a) the experiences of city police chiefs in their implementation; b) strategies employed to address challenges; and c) the aspirations to improve the implementation.

Notably, it is crucial to look into these lived experiences to contextualize the implementation of anti-criminality programs in urban areas. Additionally, considering the community's idiosyncrasies and unique environmental and socio-economic factors, the lack of studies on these factors raises questions about the adaptability and effectiveness of anti-criminality programs in diverse environments. Thus, this study contributes to the literature by providing an in-depth phenomenological account of police leadership in anti-criminality efforts, offering context-sensitive insights for policy and practice.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Community Engagement and Participation. Effective anti-crime programs rely on collaboration between police and the community. Community support enables authorities to better identify and manage local concerns (Cordner & Scarborough, 2010; Burke,

2019). According to Fabon Jr. (2018), constant interaction between them promotes knowledge sharing, strengthening officers' grasp of local customs as well as their technical and legal skills. This greater skill encourages more proactive and responsible participation in community-oriented policing. Grassroots actors bolster these efforts. Involving neighborhood associations, local leaders, and volunteer groups promotes participatory crime prevention and increases responsiveness because these actors have a thorough understanding of community dynamics (Mantiri & Siwi, 2020).

Similarly, Rupesinghe (2016) emphasizes the importance of local ownership in peacebuilding. Bottom-up initiatives that address community needs increase legitimacy and cooperation, resulting in more sustainable outcomes.

Police Motivation and Organizational Dynamics.

Officer performance is influenced by intrinsic motivation, workplace relationships, and community support. Positive interactions with the public and operational success enhance morale and job satisfaction (Umel, 2019; Refulle, 2021), while negative perceptions and prejudice reduce motivation and effectiveness. Positive community relations impact significantly the morale of police officers and job satisfaction. It cultivates trust not only between police and citizens but also within the internal ranks, as officers who feel appreciated by the community often demonstrate stronger teamwork and commitment.

Likewise, Rantz et al. (1996) posited that workplace motivation begins with human ties. Positive coworker relationships can boost employee motivation and job satisfaction. Additionally, Simpson and Balsam (2016) claimed that motivational drive energizes reacting and does not initiate or maintain action. Giblin (2017) also noted that intrinsic incentives come from performance and do not require an external agent. The work is done without considering the future. The task itself is rewarding, giving feelings of accomplishment, importance, and self-esteem.

Local Context and Program Variability. Local context fundamentally shapes the effectiveness of anti-criminality programs. Empirical research indicates that peace and order programs may be broadly well-implemented but exhibit substantial variation among communities. For instance, Nicor-Mangilimutan et al. (2020) report that their Community Peace and Order and Public Safety program was executed robustly overall, yet showed "significant differences between communities," suggesting that local social dynamics or governance structures strongly influence program performance. Bрева Jr. (2020) similarly finds that a Peace and Order and Public Safety plan was both relevant and effective in reducing crime, but the scope of that effectiveness likely depended on how well the plan was adapted to specific local conditions.

Operational, Institutional, and Financial Challenges.

Regulatory and institutional constraints pose serious obstacles to program success. Mamasalagat (2018) highlights that logistical and personnel shortages remain some of the most pressing challenges to the viability of peace and security programs. He explains that insufficient staffing severely limits the ability of field units to conduct operations effectively, especially in areas that require continuous monitoring or sustained presence. Viodor (2015) adds that weak intergovernmental coordination, particularly at the barangay level, further undermines peace and community-based security efforts. His findings indicate that some barangays fail to cooperate fully with higher-level agencies, resulting in fragmented implementation of policies and intervention programs.

Emphasizing how indispensable local government funding is to the success of anti-drug and other peacebuilding programs, Torino (2018) focused on the financial dimension of policing and showed that LGUs equipped with sufficient resources can support training, equipment procurement, community-based interventions, and sustained program monitoring which are crucial elements to long-term impact. He argues that stable financial

commitment at multiple levels of governance enables continuity, scalability, and adaptability of security initiatives. His findings demonstrate that sustainable peace cannot rely solely on manpower or coordination; it also demands consistent investment to ensure programs remain functional and effective over time.

Anti-criminality programs are inherently multifaceted, requiring a comprehensive and objective approach that goes beyond traditional reliance on law enforcement alone. Existing literature suggest the integration of collaboration, community engagement, and strong leadership. These factors play a crucial role in addressing and mitigating the complex challenges associated with the implementation of anti-criminality programs, particularly in urban areas.

METHODS

Design. This study used the transcendental phenomenological research design. Transcendental phenomenology (TPh) represents a philosophical framework within qualitative research methodology aimed at comprehending human experience. The approach is based on the principle of suspending preconceived notions (epoche) to perceive phenomena clearly, facilitating the emergence of their inherent meaning and identity (Moustakas, 1994). The study was most suited for phenomenology since it enabled an examination of the actual experiences of the city police chiefs in implementing anti-criminality programs. The researchers heard directly from the informants about their personal experiences.

Setting. This study was conducted in Leyte Island. Considering the population, land area, and the crime rate, this provided a wealth of data that was crucial for the successful conduct of the study which prompted the researchers to select the cities in the island as the study environment.

Key Informants. Ten (10) city police chiefs were purposively identified and interviewed by the

researchers. They were recruited for having at least two (2) years of experience, regardless of age and gender. Deputy police chiefs and other personnel who did not have the required experience and qualification were excluded in the study. The sample size was deemed sufficient as data saturation was achieved, wherein no new themes emerged from subsequent interviews.

Instrumentation. For this study, a semi-structured interview guide was used. The format included preliminary questions designed to establish the demographic profile and qualification of the informants. Following this, part I dealt with the implementation experiences of the informants. Part II explored their strategies and part III focused on their aspirations to improve their performance.

Data Collection. The researchers first prepared an interview guide and forwarded to the research panel for evaluation, review, and validation. Once done, the interview guide was submitted to the Ethics Committee of the Graduate School, University of Cebu–Main Campus. Thereafter, the researchers coordinated and wrote a letter to the different city police chiefs, citing the purpose of the study.

Once permission was granted, only then did the researchers gathered the data through personal in-depth interviews. Each interview lasted approximately 45–60 minutes. A consent form was also distributed, underscoring the voluntariness of participation, anonymity, and confidentiality of the information obtained throughout the study. Also, an audio recorder was used to capture the collected data, and a transcript of the interviews was produced. The transcripts were then forwarded to the informants for verification. Moreover, the researchers also resorted to an analysis of documents and published materials, both foreign and local, as supplements.

Data Analysis. In the analysis of gathered data, the researchers sought meaning from all available data, utilizing thematic analysis (TA). Thematic analysis, according to Dovetail

Editorial Team (2023), is a technique for examining qualitative data that involves reviewing a given dataset and searching for patterns to identify themes.

This study specifically employed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis. Initially, the researcher familiarized himself with the data through transcription, reading, and re-reading, and noted down initial ideas. Subsequently, initial codes were systematically generated throughout the entire data set, and data pertinent to each code were collated. Next, the investigation involved searching for themes by collecting all data relevant to each potential theme. It was followed by a review of the themes to assess their alignment with the coded extracts and the complete data set, ultimately generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis. Following this, the analysis involved a thorough examination of the themes to enhance and establish precise definitions and labels for each theme. Lastly, the report was written.

A bracketing method was employed to address potential adverse effects of unacknowledged preconceptions, thereby enhancing the rigor of the research. Tufford and Newman (2010) define bracketing as the setting aside of one's own beliefs and prior assumptions to avoid misrepresenting a subject's intended meaning, perception, or experience. Bracketing is necessary since it is difficult to determine whether this spill-over has influenced the research's results, particularly when investigating sensitive study themes and concerns.

Ethical Considerations. All efforts were made in adherence to the ethical principles of beneficence, non-maleficence, justice, and autonomy. The researchers ensured a balance between potential benefits and risks for participants. The questions were presented in a manner accessible to each of them. When clarification was requested, questions were repeated as needed. Transparency was maintained throughout all interactions. The researchers also avoided, at all times, causing harm to the informants. It included non-

disclosure of any information or sensitive data. It was ensured that they were comfortable with the venue during the interview, particularly if the situation required attention to security. Additionally, the researchers were not biased in their dealings with them, regardless of gender preference, religion, or political orientation. Lastly, the researchers informed the participants and ensured their right to make decisions based on their beliefs and values. Thus, they had the right to refuse to participate in the study and/or withdraw participation in the interview if it conflicted with their beliefs and values.

RESULTS

The lived experiences of the city police chiefs provided context on their anti-criminality programs implementation. Out of the responses, eight (8) themes emerged which accurately captured their experiences (positive and negative), strategies employed, and their aspirations to improve their performance.

Positive Experiences

Theme 1. Unified Voices, Shared Strength. This theme reflects the collaborative efforts by the stakeholders and the police. Consequently, the informants were appreciative of the support they received.

With a grateful smile, Informant 4 stated: *"We appreciate the strong support the LGU provides to the police which gives us a significant advantage"* (Informant 4).

Informant 6 also shared his experience, highlighting the significant impact of the community's support. *"In my area of operation, the community is supportive of the police, and local law enforcement is held in high regard compared to other areas"* (Informant 6).

Informant 10 added as she confidently pondered on her experiences in collaborating with the barangays under her area of operation. *"I encourage their participation, as effective collaboration with the barangay is essential."*

They have the local knowledge needed to identify and address community issues” (Informant 10).

Theme II. Trust as the Foundation. This theme outlines transparency, accountability, and the fostering of trust between the police and the community as the bedrock upon which the program stands strong, ensuring lasting support and cooperative action.

As he recalled his experience, Informant 3 revealed that: *“We see to it that everything in these cases involving minors must be documented, and there must be guests and witnesses. As I always say, there must be transparency in our coordination with different agencies because, by law, they must always be included” (Informant 3).*

Similarly, transparency through proper information dissemination keeps the people updated and well-informed. It is critical, especially in far-flung areas, as it helps rectify misconceptions. Hence, the informants have to be innovative in disseminating information. Taking advantage of technological advancements is necessary.

It was displayed adequately through the revelations made by Informant 4 in his statement that: *“Why? This policy is in place because some individuals have shared sensitive information on social media without our consent, which may compromise the integrity of the investigation” (Informant 4).*

Another way of ensuring support and cooperation is through a firm and sincere display of accountability, as evident in the statement made by Informant 6. *“We initiate administrative or criminal proceedings against police officers who commit offenses to demonstrate our commitment to impartiality and accountability. This stance leaves no room for exceptions, including members of the police force, particularly during the tenure of our previous superior, who upheld stringent standards. No offense is overlooked. When a police officer is found to have committed such*

violations, we promptly file the appropriate case” (Informant 6).

Negative Experiences

Theme III. Dearth of Resources. This theme reflects the inadequacy of human and logistical resources that hindered the participants' effective program implementation.

When asked to expound on the impact of the issue, Informant 1 revealed this in her statement: *“This situation presents a challenge for me, as our movements are somewhat restricted, particularly when personnel are required to be in the city. In such cases, we cannot refuse the request. Consequently, the number of personnel available for patrolling is reduced, as others are assigned to field duties. Naturally, this results in no personnel being present at the station” (Informant 1).*

Additionally, this also affects the quality of service, as mentioned by Informant 7 in his statement that: *“Besides, if your people are overworked, the quality of their work is also affected. They have to be given a chance to spend quality time with their family and take a rest” (Informant 7).*

Informant 8 divulged that city police chiefs also struggle to respond to multiple incidents due to mobility issues. *“As I said, one factor is the lack of personnel and mobility. For example, for us to respond quickly, we need to have our mobility assets, and we only have one patrol car issued by the PNP” (Informant 8).*

This statement is also evident in the remarks made by Informant 10. *“Our primary concern is the limitation of our mobility assets. Although only one patrol car is assigned, the area covered by Station 4 is substantial. At times, this has presented operational challenges. Simultaneous incidents have particularly strained our response capabilities, as we have had difficulties responding to additional situations while others are still active. Additionally, we still need to proceed with filing the case” (Informant 10).*

Theme IV. Administrative Indifference. While it is true that the community was receptive to the anti-criminality program, some stakeholders were indifferent.

It is evident in the statement made by Informant 3 when probed about the reason. *“Some barangay officials refer the case to us, especially if they see that an influential person is involved. Some do not cooperate because they are not equipped when appearing before the court as arresting officers. It is as if they were just forced to do it because of their function as a barangay tanod, which obviously, they do not have enough knowledge about”* (Informant 3).

Informant 10 also mentioned that: *“There are occasions when barangay officials are unable to attend due to other commitments. In such cases, we participate in barangay activities on their behalf to ensure continued community engagement”* (Informant 10).

Strategies Employed

Theme V. Turning Limitations into Innovation. This theme addresses the strategies employed by the informants in response to the inadequacy of logistical resources.

It is demonstrated in a statement made by Informant 3 when questioned about his strategies. He mentioned that: *“Within the PNP organization, it cannot be said that we lack personnel. Currently, it is difficult to find any organization that is not experiencing similar challenges. Therefore, we maximize the resources available to us by pursuing innovation, as innovation is essential. For instance, at present, we have only one patrol car, so we have scheduled all trips efficiently to optimize its use”* (Informant 3).

Informant 6 also articulated his strategic collaboration with the stakeholders through this statement: *“We do outsource for computers, printers, and laptops in our station. We ask for help from our stakeholders”* (Informant 6).

When probed about the mobility issues and how they usually address them, Informant 7 revealed that: *“That’s right, we use our motorcycles. Personal motorcycles. Sometimes I use my own car”* (Informant 7).

Theme VI. Empowering through Knowledge. This theme demonstrates the informants’ resolve and efforts to ensure effective collaboration through capacity building and upskilling.

Informant 3 highlighted the importance of barangay officials in their anti-criminality campaigns. Consequently, the informant had to develop their capacities through informative seminars, ensuring their efficacy. It is evident in his statement, as presented below: *“We also educate the Katarungang Pambarangay members so they can learn where and when to refer to us a case involving family issues. Oftentimes, they directly proceed to our office for blotter purposes without knowing that it must first be settled in the barangay”* (Informant 3).

Acknowledging the role of barangay officials as force multipliers and other anti-crime volunteers, Informant 4 added that: *“In addition, we advocate to the City Mayor for the skills enhancement of our tanods. I consistently underscore to LGU officials and barangay councils the significance of our force multipliers and anti-crime volunteers. I emphasize their importance due to the limited number of personnel assigned. It is not feasible to monitor every area of each barangay solely with existing staff. Therefore, we highlight the crucial role these individuals serve as our counterparts”* (Informant 4).

Another instance where the informants ensure the successful implementation of their programs is through capacity building. They believe in the power of education, especially on matters involving the welfare of their personnel.

Informant 5 mentioned that: *“About welfare, I ensure that my personnel are adequately*

prepared to fulfill their duties. I facilitate their professional development through educational opportunities, invite subject matter experts to provide lectures, and conduct formal briefings on newly issued directives and memorandum circulars” (Informant 5).

Aspirations to Improve the Implementation

Theme VII. Technology-Driven Growth. This theme depicts the aspirations of the informants to improve their implementation through technological advancements. Accordingly, their aspiration isn't merely to react to crime but to prevent it before it even begins.

It is best reflected in the statement made by Informant 1. She mentioned having an initiative that employs the benefits of technological advancements. *“I have in mind an initiative that uses AI technology in easily identifying people's identities who have criminal records if ever they are spotted in a CCTV. It's a facial recognition database. However, it requires support since it will involve resources from IT” (Informant 1).*

When probed about the informant's aspiration of having an improved database and how it impacts his program implementation, Informant 3 revealed: *“Maintaining our database at PNP, Station 3, is highly beneficial. Continuous input is performed on a monthly, weekly, and daily basis. Through this process, we can monitor emerging trends and identify locations of new activities or incidents. This enables us to analyze and determine our subsequent actions within our Area of Responsibility (AOR). It is essential to have a systematized database for our collected information to facilitate the identification of individuals involved” (Informant 3).*

Informant 10 shares the same aspiration, as reflected in her statement below. *“Second, we need to take advantage of technology in crime prevention. We can make better informed decisions if we take advantage of technology” (Informant 10).*

Theme VIII. A Journey, Not a Destination. This theme portrays the aspirations of the informants for a sustained community and personnel support. Accordingly, the informants believe their support make the program effective. This is manifested in Informant 2's statement. *“My only wish is that they continue supporting me and the office. I always tell them that no matter how capable a chief is, without the dedication of the personnel, it is pointless. Even a less knowledgeable police chief can effectively lead the station if backed by his team. So, all I ask from them is cooperation” (Informant 2).*

Informant 8 also acknowledged this idea and revealed in his statement that: *“I encourage the LGU to continue supporting this station, promote ongoing community cooperation with the PNP, and advocate for the election of qualified leaders” (Informant 8).*

DISCUSSION

The study revealed that cooperation of barangays (local villages) was essential to achieving success in anti-criminality programs. The informants highlighted that they could not operate effectively without barangay cooperation because the local community has a deep understanding of their areas' specific issues, underscoring the importance of local knowledge and community engagement in crime prevention efforts. In consonance, Burke (2019) emphasized that citizen involvement is essential and requires the creation of new avenues that foster a genuine partnership between residents and the police.

Consequently, working together enabled the identification and prioritization of contemporary problems to resolve issues of concern. Through encouragement, the populace and the barangay officials became aware of their worth and potential to contribute immensely to the successful conduct of the anti-criminality programs. It developed their notion of self-efficacy, which greatly contributed to the program that the informants considered to have

significantly impacted their careers as city police chiefs.

This symbiotic relationship resulted in a renewed sense of purpose among the informants. They were able to develop their self-efficacy through mastery of experience. Lopez-Garrido (2025) asserts that mastery experiences serve as the most significant source of efficacy information, as they offer the most genuine evidence of an individual's capability to achieve success. Consequently, success fosters a strong belief in one's efficacy. Failures diminish it, particularly when they occur before a solid sense of efficacy has been established (Bandura, 1997).

Likewise, achieving public safety relies on community trust in law enforcement. Since police authority is grounded in public approval, increasing openness is essential for building trust. Transparency fosters trust among the community and other agencies involved. Like any other relationship, eroded trust is detrimental. Aside from being mandated by law, the informants do this to showcase respect. The symbiosis between the police and the community is maintained through it.

The study revealed that the informants have utilized recent technological advancements in promoting transparency. They created social media pages to post their accomplishment reports, anti-criminality tips, and information about their mandate. They do this to reach their constituents situated in far-flung areas whom they cannot visit. This finds relevance to Biggs (2018) statement that setting up a transparency portal is one way to increase transparency and share information with the community. Additionally, Bertot et al., 2010 maintained that when the public receives more information, their confidence in law enforcement grows. Hence, promoting transparency in every aspect of the program is crucial.

The informants also ensured that due process is observed and held their erring personnel accountable. This is to ensure the integrity of the organization, resulting in a robust

relationship between the community and the police. Ethridge (2022) asserts that transparency and accountability are essential for the integrity and effectiveness of a police department. Without these elements, law enforcement is unable to mitigate crime, enhance safety, or adequately serve communities. Further, Mazerolle et al. (2013) found that procedural justice enhances legitimacy and encourages cooperation with police commands.

Notwithstanding, the informants encountered challenges. Accordingly, some things are beyond their control, and this significantly impacted their implementation. Considering the geographical size of their respective AOR and the population size, the number of personnel proves to be limited. Consequently, their actions are also limited, especially on instances where simultaneous concerns require their immediate attention. This resonates with the findings of Mamasalagat's (2018) study, asserting that lack of personnel tends to affect the performance of police officers in a program, particularly those that require these officers to be in the field.

Moreover, despite the support received from the Local Government Unit, not everything can be provided. There are instances where some personnel have to use their own vehicles, underscoring the importance of mobility assets. This aligns with Gom-gom-o Jr. (2024) who found that although Local Government Units collaborated and offered support, a lack of funds limited the effectiveness of crime prevention efforts. Along with this, limited resources, including a lack of patrol cars, communication devices, and surveillance technology, reduced both operational readiness and timely crime prevention efforts. Annang et al. (2023) further observed that such shortages contributed to delayed officer deployment and restricted mobility, especially in rural or remote areas with extensive geographic coverage.

The study also revealed the extent to which administrative indifference hampers the informants' implementation of their anti-criminality programs. It is expected that

barangay officials will extend their support and cooperation to the informants. However, this has not always been the case due to the issue on legal and technical competence of some barangay officials. This is congruent with the study of Viodor (2015), which revealed that there is a lack of cooperation and coordination coming from the barangays.

Consequently, these experiences caused undue stress to the informants, which indirectly affected their drive. Policing is a challenging and overtly stressful occupation that encompasses a wide variety of physical, emotional, and psychological demands (Brady, 2017). Officers are regularly exposed to a diverse array of occupational stressors that may jeopardize their safety or that of their fellow officers. Webster (2013) underscored those police officers are expected to manage these work-related hazards while operating in an environment that poses additional obstacles in the form of organizational stressors.

As a result, officers with higher levels of actual and perceived stress are at an increased risk for a host of negative physical health problems, psychological struggles, and behavioral outcomes (Brady, 2017). Otto and Gatens (2022) added that stress takes an emotional and physical toll on police officers, sometimes leading to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which is estimated to be higher among police officers than among those in the general population.

Despite these challenges, they were motivated to continue because of their mandate to secure the future and welfare of our country. Gomgom-o Jr. (2024) emphasized that police officers must fulfill their responsibilities and demonstrate dedication despite personal challenges. Similarly, Dempsey et al. (2023) stated that police personnel are governed by ethical codes and professional norms that guide behavior and decision-making. Adherence to honesty, integrity, and impartiality enables officers to overcome challenges and maintain public confidence.

Consequently, the informants believed in their competence, which in turn led them to be more competitive and innovative. The informants sought to solve challenges regarding the effectiveness and legitimacy of their anti-criminality programs. They found a way to circumvent the system and have it work in their favor. On matters relating to barangay visits, they ensured cooperation and participation by randomly visiting barangay assemblies. In this manner, they were able to secure an opportunity to engage with the barangay people, officials, and other stakeholders.

The informants also understood how educational intervention and training programs can empower barangay officials, police personnel, and other key persons to become more competent, confident, and cooperative actors in governance and anti-criminality efforts. Thus, they conducted informative seminars and capacity-building trainings, including peer-mentoring. They firmly believed that these strategies significantly improved their implementation and relationship with their personnel.

Notably, Lacanilao (2021) reported that barangay tanods demonstrate limited understanding of procedures for assisting victims of violence against women and managing children in conflict with the law. Similarly, Sumad-on (2024) asserts that barangay tanods exhibit moderate efficacy in crime prevention due to inadequate adherence to their duties, such as patrolling, surveilling suspicious individuals, and identifying hazards in various establishments, compounded by insufficient orientation.

With the challenges encountered, they were able to identify key actions and innovations that will help them in their endeavor. While some of it may be realized, others may not. The informants envision their anti-criminality efforts evolving due to the technological advancements brought forth by the digital age. As a proactive measure, they aspire to benefit from it through upgrades in their logistical requirements, especially in computers and

databases. Crime is dynamic, and the informants acknowledge this. Hence, having and maintaining a database is a must. Predictive analysis can be done to forecast crime trends and patterns. This, in turn, leads to a knowledge-driven crime prevention.

Due to the increase in cybercrime cases, the informants can only hope for an improved digitization in the PNP. They have to be adept at the complexities of modern technology used in policing and crime prevention. This aspiration implies their continued and unwavering commitment to improving their services by leveraging technological advancements, supported by the administrators of the PNP.

Technology has always played a crucial role in law enforcement. According to the National Police Chiefs Council (2016), many police departments are now more technologically proficient than before. Borrion (2018) added that this technical progress has paralleled changes in policing methods.

The informants also aspired for the continued support and cooperation from the community and their colleagues. Their aspirations speak not of outcomes but of a collective path forward paved with mutual support, trust, and unwavering cooperation. They envision a community that grows stronger through each challenge, where every step taken together matters more than any singular achievement. In their words, the journey becomes a powerful symbol of resilience and shared purpose, reminding us that lasting change is built not in isolation but through the continued commitment of every individual walking alongside one another.

Indeed, public collaboration is fundamental to the contemporary police paradigm. Brantingham and Uchida (2021) asserted that without the collaboration of individuals and communities, the police would be alerted to very few crimes, and even fewer would be resolved. In addition, Obodozie and Nwabufo (2025) mentioned that fostering a culture of shared accountability and communal problem-

solving enhances organizations and enables them to emerge more resilient in the face of adversity.

Conclusion. The successful implementation of anti-criminality programs, particularly in urban areas, necessitates a multi-faceted and context-sensitive approach. Geographic and population size, idiosyncrasies, logistical resources, including legal and technical competence of barangay officials significantly impact the program. Consequently, city police chiefs in Leyte Island draw out motivation from the support and participation of the community and other stakeholders in their implementation. This is relevant since it highlights legitimacy, local context, and variability of crime situations. Along with this, transparency and accountability must be ensured to foster trust between the police and community, as it encourages participation from the stakeholders. Additionally, city police chiefs have to rely on the power of innovation and education to overcome the inherent challenges in their mandate. Lastly, enhanced focus on the digitization and digitalization of their services proved to be essential for them to be relatively effective with the substantial increase in cybercrimes within the region. This, together with the continued support, participation, and collaboration from the community and other stakeholders, will ensure their successful implementation of their anti-criminality program.

Recommendations. Based on the findings of the study, the following actions are recommended:

Resource Management and Partnerships. The PNP must further optimize resource allocation and workforce distribution to ensure efficiency and responsiveness. They must also give an enhanced focus on the digitization and digitalization of their services to keep up with technology-related criminalities. Likewise, police chiefs are encouraged to pursue corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives and establish public-private partnerships to augment existing resources.

Training and Capacity Building. Greater emphasis should be placed by the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) on standardizing training programs for barangay tanods who act as force multipliers to ensure consistency, professionalism, and competence.

Accountability and Monitoring. Accountability mechanisms should be strengthened by the National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM) through the implementation of clear performance standards and improved monitoring systems to ensure transparency and adherence to protocols.

Community Engagement and Transparency. Efforts should be intensified to promote community collaboration and transparency, fostering trust and cooperation between law enforcement and the public.

Community Feedback Mechanisms. The community should be actively encouraged to provide constructive feedback to barangay officials and police units regarding their performance and responsiveness, contributing to continuous improvement.

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