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Threats Opportunities Weakness Strength (TOWS) Analysis in Police Investigation: A Framework towards Best Practices

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Abstract

The effectiveness of crime investigation depends greatly on the competencies of investigators, which are shaped by both internal and external factors. Guided by Competency Theory, which emphasizes the ability to perform tasks efficiently and effectively—especially in demanding roles like police work—this study explored several key questions. It examined the qualifications of investigators that contribute to effective crime-solving, their perspectives on external influences such as threats and opportunities, and their views on internal factors such as strengths and weaknesses. The study also looked into how investigators experience and manage issues related to these external and internal forces. Using a qualitative phenomenological approach, insights were gathered from ten trained and experienced investigators from the Quezon City Police District. Through Thematic and TOWS analyses, twelve major themes emerged: administration and supervision; knowledge, skills, and attitude; human resources and communication; critical thinking; force multipliers; the criminal justice system; organized crime groups; political interference; modernized investigation methods; data-driven information systems; and cybercrime. Based on these findings, a strategic action plan was developed aiming to enhance investigator competency, strengthen surveillance and crime tracking, address organized crime, upgrade investigative technology, and uphold ethical investigative practices.

Keywords: *Threats Opportunities Weakness Strength (TOWS) Analysis, Thematic Analysis, Police Investigation*

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INTRODUCTION

Crime Investigation is one of the most important skills if not the most critical in enforcement of law. If police investigators perform their best in reporting a crime, all evidence gathered will be admissible to court and the case will be heard. Given the importance of the capability of police investigators in the resolution of criminal cases, police assigned in crime investigation should possess a suitable skills set that would strengthen the resolution of cases. However, many police are being hindered in actually performing their task as investigators, for there are many loopholes that need to be addressed, not only within localized criminal activities but more in dealing with organized crimes in terms of administrative support, skills enhancement and even systemic in nature.

Much focus in crime investigations is on emerging crimes like for example economic crime, cybercrime, dark web, terrorism and online sexual exploitation (Mitchell and Huey, 2019); but, dealing with such crimes involve complex process, notwithstanding evidence required to take these cases through the criminal justice chain. There is also the involvement of various legal, ethical, and practical issues associated within the Organization in which crime investigators belong (Mitchell and Huey, 2019, Nichols, 2024). There is a need to determine what factors or forces could significantly impact the smooth flow of the investigation process. This process of fact finding is done through identifying the threats, opportunities, weakness and strengths (TOWS) within and outside of the boundaries of police investigation (Van Uhm & Niman, 2022; University of Hertfordshire, 2021). The practice of crime investigation in the Philippines particularly under the leadership of the Philippine National Police is a critical one. This is because of the many unresolved criminal cases due to many factors such as producing solid evidence, police ability to secure and maintain witnesses, and absence of necessary technical inputs brought about by modern interventions in crime investigation, most often are only present in rich countries.

However, despite the presence of modern technology available in police agencies in some parts of the world, challenges in investigation occur. This is due to lack of competent investigators about the tedious process of fact-finding and sorting through evidence and information; eliminating possibilities, validating events, and recording evidence; all the while engaging in an intentional process of thinking, analysing, and strategically working towards predetermined goals. Laws and ordinances have been instituted in order to give guidance and support for law enforcement agencies. No less than the Constitution of the Philippines sanctifies the principle, that public office is a public trust, and enjoins all officers and employees to serve with the highest degree of responsibility, integrity, loyalty, and efficiency. However, despite the mandate of the Constitution, the Supreme Court has found police officers guilty of misconduct for using unnecessary coercion and violence while conducting their operations (Supreme Court Public Information, 2024). As such guidelines on police crime investigation are also emphasized by the passage of Republic Act No. 3815, which is the primary legal basis for crime in the Philippines. Included in this Act is the definition of criminal offenses, the penalties for committing them, and how to classify offenders. On the other hand, Revised Rules of Criminal Procedure (2021) specifically Rule 110 covers institution of criminal action, complaint, information, complainant defined, information defined, who must prosecute or take action/s, sufficiency or complaint or information, name of the accused, designation of the offense, cause of accusation, place of commission of the offense, name of the offended party, date of the commission of the offense, name of the offended party, duplicity of the offense and amendment or substitution and place where action is to be instituted. Furthermore, as for creating a for enhanced crime investigation in the PNP, this study rests on RA 8551, also known as the PNP Reform Law, builds upon the

framework established by RA 6975 which aims to further reform and reorganize the PNP, addressing issues such as personnel development, career progression, promotion, and modernization efforts within the police force (Lawphil, 2024; Senate, 2024). These measures are being implemented because the many unresolved cases due to failure in investigation (PIO, 2024; Caliwan, 2024). Police are the initial faces of law enforcement and the first persons to uphold the law. The integrity of the police is important for functioning law and order, since poor credibility of the police negatively impacts the government and its instrumentalities (Severo, 2023; Singh, 2022). Given the mounting unresolved cases on crime investigation in both international and national scenarios, there is a need to address gaps not addressed, for example conduct of study on TOWS instead of SWOT; planting and illegal publication of evidence (University of Hertfordshire, 2021; Severo, 2023); determining first contributory factors with regard to the success or failure in crime investigation (Nichols, 2024; Van, 2021); founded on laws and ordinances (Law-Phil, 2024, Supreme Court, 2024); establishing failure in investigation (Caliwan, 2022; Singh, 2022). Addressing these gaps, particularly through the process of determining factors or forces happening in both external and internal venues could well establish the bases for police investigations' reforms, in order to deter or avoid the pitfalls of wrongful arrest, lack of evidence and securing of witnesses through community participation. Finally, there is a need to establish the role of both external and internal forces; the strengths and loopholes in the investigating process as noted in the related literature, such the role of demographic profile in investigation, strengths of police investigation in relation to their knowledge, skills, training and development, and role of the Accountability, transparency and Community Participation in the Investigative Process**.**

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This study was anchored on the "Competency Theory" which is defined as the capacity to perform job efficiently and effectively particularly in a very demanding job as police investigators. Police investigators should have a variety of skills and qualities to be effective like being attentive to details, able to use crucial decision in building a case, must possess, able to communicate well with others and should be able to use information technology effectively among others needed skills (BC Campus. 2024). In general this theory displays people's competence as people's autonomous and active involvement in dealing with environments and as a fundamental quality of a person that is causally related to criterion-reference and superior performance in the workplace (Martinez-Casanovas et al., 2022). Another theoretical perspective was on reliance on both information and communication theories. Criminal investigations heavily rely as they involve collecting, analysing, and sharing information to solve crimes. The "crime-as-communication" approach, for example, views criminal acts as communicative exchanges, where all involved are senders and recipients of messages. This approach emphasizes how technology and communication shape criminal activities, especially in online environments (Kikerpiill,K. (2023). Additionally, effective communication within the criminal justice system, including between investigators, forensic scientists, and the courts, is crucial for successful investigations. The above theories were found relevant firstly because supported the conceptual framework of this study, since this attempted to determine the competencies of police investigators in terms of their educational attainment, competence in terms of knowledge, skills and aptitude, relevant training, and experiences in relation to crime investigation. The second set of variables covers the external factors influencing or affecting the conduct of crime investigation; namely the threats or conditions or situations that hinder the effectiveness and efficiency in performance of police investigation; as well as the opportunities of situations or conditions that could promote or could be availed of by police investigators towards successful crime investigation. On the other hand, the

internal factors or forces are the weakness associated within the police station and the Organization (PNP). These weaknesses deter or hinder the execution of effective police investigation; while strengths on the other hand, could be seen as a positive contribution to arrest progress of the weakness. Given the mounting unresolved cases on crime investigation in both international and national scenarios, there is a need to address gaps not addressed, for example conduct of study on TOWS instead of SWOT; planting and illegal publication of evidence (University of Hertfordshire, 2021; Severo, 2023); determining first contributory factors with regard to the success or failure in crime investigation (Nichols, 2024; Van, 2021); founded on laws and ordinances (Law-Phil, 2024, Supreme Court, 2024); establishing failure in investigation (Caliwan, 2022; Singh, 2022). Addressing these gaps, particularly through the process of determining factors or forces happening in both external and internal venues could well establish the bases for police investigations' reforms, in order to deter or avoid the pitfalls of wrongful arrest, lack of evidence and securing of witnesses through community participation. Also, there is a need to establish the role of both external and internal forces; the strengths and loopholes in the investigating process as noted in the related literature, such the role of demographic profile in investigation, strengths of police investigation in relation to their knowledge, skills, training and development, and role of the Accountability, transparency and Community Participation in the Investigative Process**.**

Objectives

The purpose of these Threats, Opportunities, Weaknesses and Strengths) (TOWS) and Thematic analyses was to come up with a proposed strategic action plan for enhancement of crime investigation practice in QCPD. Specifically this study sought answers to the following questions:

1: What qualifications do the participants possess (based from their profile) that could promote efficient and effective crime investigations?

2: What are perspectives of police investigators concerning both internal and external factors or forces affecting or influencing police crime investigation in terms of Threats and Opportunities?

3: How do research participant's deal or experience issues or concerns about police crime investigation, in both external and internal factors and forces external?

4: From the shared perspectives and experiences of the research participants, what themes emerged that provided the essence and substance of police crime investigation?

5: What action plan may be proposed to QCPD and police stations in order to enhance the competencies of police crime investigation?

METHODS

Research Design

This study applied the Qualitative-Phenomenological research design that describes the common meanings of the participants based on their lived experience as crime investigators. The basic purpose was to reduce those experiences, direct observation or validated perception about a phenomenon being studied (Creswell and Poth, 2018, p 75). In this instance the phenomenon included lived experiences of 10 police experts' investigators in QCPD about the strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats they have encountered or are encountering as police experts investigators in the areas of investigation- QCPD. The goal was to come up with a strategic action plan or course of

actions for enhancement of police competencies in the field of investigation.

After establishing the generalized themes, TOWS analysis followed. The results were further analysed using related literature in order to assess differences or similarities associated with crime investigations. A strategic action plan of actions are created (University of Hertfordshire, 2021).

Population and Locale of the Study

This study applied purposive sampling methods and used 10 participants which comprised the sample. According to Creswell and Poth, 2018, ideal number of participants could be between 5-20 individuals. This study indicated inclusion criteria such as graduate of bachelor's degree preferably criminology graduate holding the rank of at least Staff Sergeant or PO3 and handled several cases, graduate of formal Investigation Course offered by the government and additional training in Intelligence Course; at least 5 years assigned to investigation; no administrative or criminal case filed against him; and was recipient of awards and commendations in connection with his designation in investigation. The inclusion included a total of 5 police station investigators and 5 investigators under the DIDMD. The locale of this study was situated in the Quezon City Police District with constituents of 16 police stations. The Quezon City Police District (QCPD) is a police district under the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) of the Philippine National Police (PNP) serves the Quezon City as its law enforcement agency.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study was delimited to getting the perspectives (validated perception) of police investigators belonging to 5 police stations and 5 investigators from the DIDMD under the jurisdiction of the Quezon City Police District. The areas for inquiry will only cover the lived experiences of the participants who were experts in the field (see inclusion criteria under participants). The questions will revolve around the Strengths or the certain characteristics of professional crime investigators involving their knowledge, skills and attitudes that give an advantage to police investigators in performing their functions in particular their strong communication skills, interviewing skills, ability to gather facts from witnesses and suspects; and maintaining an attitude of calmness under pressure and make logical and ethical decisions; Weakness or the certain characteristics by investigators that could put their performance of their function at a disadvantage involve both within the investigators themselves and in the criminal justice system. In terms of personal factors, investigators may have preconceive notions which could lead them to leading wrong paths and leave out important facts which are crucial in the case resolution; Opportunities or some external factors that are outside the PNP that contribute to the success in crime investigation; and Threats or some external factors that are outside of the PNP's organizational control that influence the success in crime investigation.

Data Gathering Tools

The main tool for data gathering was an In-depth interview guide, which was composed of open ended questions revolving around two general mode of questions: textural of what and structural of how (Creswell and Poth, p. 75). In order to establish the validity of the research tool, content validity and face validity will be used (Johnson and Christensen, 2000). For content validity or expert judgment, the concepts; whereas, for face validation it will be done by a 3-member panel consisting of experts in research and the topic. Relying solely on their expertise and experiences, the panel of experts critiqued and evaluated the thesis manuscript including the questionnaire (see appendix). The suggestions and recommendations of the panel of experts were used as bases for revisions of the

questionnaire and thesis proposal manuscript.

Data Gathering Procedure

All necessary permissions were sought prior to the conduct of survey and interview. First, the draft of the research tools was presented to the dissertation adviser for his comment and suggestions. The research tools were then revised and then approvals for experts in the field of research and subject matters (police investigators) were sought. Prior to data gathering, the researcher asked permission from the head of the Quezon City Police District. (QCPD). After getting the approval, the researcher proceeded to the five police stations to get the permission of the respective heads as well. As soon as the paper passed the proposal stage, floating of the questionnaire and the in-depth interviews were done. Then in February, all answers were collated and underwent thematic analysis. Finally the final write up of the manuscript and final defence, all necessary revisions as suggested by the panels were compiled.

Validation and Strategies

In a qualitative method, this study used triangulation validity which involves the validation according to the Researcher's Lens, the Participants Lens and the Reviewer Lens. In the researcher's lens or scrutiny he consulted multiple data sources and theories to corroborate the evidence to shed light on the diverse themes derived from the in-depth interviews. On the other hand, participants themselves (also called co-researchers) perspectives regarding the concepts investigated were solicited in order to establish the credibility of the findings. This means that their opinions became part of proving the reliability of the data. Finally, for the Reviewers' lens, or the external auditors or panel of research experts were asked to examine both the process of the data gathering and the product the account to assess their accuracy (Creswell and Poth, 2018 p 262).

Thematic Analysis

Data analysis in a qualitative research involve preparing and organizing transcripts or image data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and presenting the data in figures, tables or a discussion (Creswell and Poth, 2018 163)

TOWS Analysis. TOWS Matrix was derived from the SWOT Analysis model. It is noteworthy that the acronym TOWS is a modification of SWOT and was advanced in 1982 by the American International Business Professor Heinz Weirich, entitled: A tool for Situational Analysis. Ong /Range Plan. The TOWS Matrix is aimed at developing strategic options from an external–internal analysis and is a practical tool that is used to identify solutions to enhance the competencies of police investigation (Akola, J, 2022).

TOWS analysis is an extension of SWOT analysis helps in identifying strategic options by matching internal strengths and weaknesses with external opportunities and threats. Instead of just listing these factors, TOWS analysis helps you determine strategies to capitalize on opportunities, mitigate threats, leverage strengths, and address weaknesses (https://lederindsigt.dk/en/content/tows/). The data came from the results of the themes derived from the qualitative research design, and presented in Matrix form.

The TOWS Matrix is a powerful strategic planning tool that offers a systematic framework for organizations to evaluate their internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats. In this case, crime investigation in different police stations could gain valuable insights into their strategic position, both externally and internally.

Reflexivity in a Qualitative Study

During the researcher's active duty, he experienced that every time an incident happened and was reported to his police station, the first thing he would do is to call the attention of the nearest personnel to immediately proceed to the given location purposely to verify and check the reported incident. Usually, they called the policeman who first responded to the crime scene. If it is found positive they immediately perform their task. He remembers that the policemen assigned to the police beat, although they have no designation as investigators but as experience, the first responder immediately initiates questioning which means that the first responder plays a vital role and also part of the investigation process and whatever evidence they gathered during the course of their interview, they subsequently turnover the same to the officer in case. Still, the problem is the first responder usually has no formal training in investigation. In every police station, they have a limited number of investigators to respond to the cases being reported by the victims or witnesses. The grey area, there is the first responder to perform the job as investigator because the first responder is included in the PNP field manual on investigation of violent crimes and other crimes. Due to this, the first responder usually committed loopholes. Another thing that he observed was the proper keeping of evidence. The evidence is usually under the custody of the investigator on case because he was the one who received that said evidence from the inquest prosecutor. Sometimes it affects the proper keeping of evidence and eventually affects the case filed in the court. Qualitative research relies on nuanced judgements that require researcher reflexivity or a set of continuous, collaborative, and multifaceted practices through which researchers self-consciously critique, appraise, and evaluate how their subjectivity and context influence the research processes. The reflexivity clause here was to embrace and value the researchers' subjectivity (Olmos-Vega;Carpio;andKahike,2022).

Ethical Consideration

The informed consent indicated by Locke, Spirduso and Silverman (2000) were followed. This protocol includes informing the research participants of the general nature of the research, their role in terms of time and efforts, the observance of their anonymity, the benefit that they will get from participating in the study and the opportunity to receive feedback about the results of the study. Likewise, the researcher will see to it that there is no subjective interpretation of the data, only derived from the arrived findings of the study.

Throughout the study, the researcher prioritized ethical principles to protect the rights and well-being of participants, particularly police investigators under the QCPD within the Philippine National Police (PNP). A voluntary and informed consent was obtained from the respondents of the study with assurance of their anonymity and confidentiality given the sensitive nature of the study topic. Safeguard the identities of participants and ensure that any information shared during the study remains undisclosed to unauthorized individuals.

Moreover, research manuscripts will only be stored with the Graduate School and will be used for educational purposes.

Dissemination of the Research Outcome

After this study commences, conclusions and from which recommendations will be derived, an intervention Competency Training Program for police crime investigators in QCPD Program that will be proposed to the Head of

the QCPD based from the analysis of results of this study. The outcome will likewise be presented to the station commanders of the 5 police stations and Criminal Investigation Detection Unit to include DIDMD.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

All the 10 participants are seasoned police investigators with no less than 5 years length of experience in the field of crime investigation, except for one who has attained a doctoral degree, all are Criminology graduates and one has a BSBA degree. Despite the lack of much higher education, they received much training from the PNP such as Criminal investigation courses and also were recipients of several awards and commendations in relation to their work as police investigators. Two of the ten participants are female.

it could be surmised that they already possessed relevant qualifications for police investigation. However, there are gaps that still need to be determined such as, are the qualifications they possess sufficient enough for an efficient and effective police investigation? In order to conduct a thorough and effective police investigation, investigators need a blend of formal education, specialized training, and practical experience, encompassing legal knowledge, investigative techniques, and interpersonal skills. Added to these are psychological knowledge, analytical skills, communication skills, interpersonal skills, problem solving skills, informational technology and situational awareness based on sufficient experience. These are general assumptions regarding the qualification that crime investigators should possess.

In addition to gender and age, a study conducted by Woods et.al (2019) revealed that there is no relationship between lengths of service to commission of administration and that tenure is associated with misconduct, with younger and less experienced officers receiving more complaints than older and more experienced officers. Dawees, Scott, Canetti, Locke, Schram and Orr (2022) study the correlation of sex and gender in police recruits' performance. They operated on their assumptions that police should be physically fit to do the rigorous task of policing; and the two most profile requirements are gender and age of the police. Through a Physical Competency Test (PCT), they tested the ability of police in a 400 m obstacle course and found that in general male trainees completed the PCT faster than female trainees.

Skipanes, Dermatini, Franke & Nisses (2025) said that in criminal investigation most information is often overlooked due to the manual analysis of vast amounts of text, and this could be associated with lack of a framework for information analysis. Thus in a paper they published in Norway. They categorized 742,135 investigative tasks and found out that the major information sources are Interviews and Digital Evidence. This finding was supported by (Partridge and Zaghlou 2023) who said that due to information overload, analysis of these data become difficult due to limited computational support by integrating it with computational methods from the realm of Artificial Intelligence (AI) (Devlin et al., 2019, Gao et al, 2023 and Lewis, et al. ,2020).

These modern technologies for investigation purposes, when fully adapted by the PNP will upgrade competencies in dealing with information and communication about the location of suspects, witnesses and significant persons connected with the case on hand; thus contributing to successful conduct of the investigative process, particularly in QCPD.

A total of 12 themes emerged from 101 significant statements from 10 police investigators. These themes cover both external and internal under the threats, opportunities, weaknesses and strengths indicators.

Theme 1: Issues Connected with the Criminal Justice System

The participants (police investigators) claim that there is a problem with the criminal justice system. This is in connection with the slow process of persecution of cases. This concern of the police investigators was supported by the study of Anijani (2023) who investigated the reasons for the loopholes in the investigative process or the weaknesses in the conduct of investigation. Two prominent factors were identified such as delay in crime resolution and inability to investigate a crime. Some conditions and/or situations cause the delay such as getting participation of a witness, securing warrant, lack of investigative officer, transfer of investigator, and securing of evidence.

As such, criminals use the loopholes in the legal system to evade punishment. The source of loopholes arise from the complex nature of the criminal justice system or the legal system, for example criminals can evade justice because of technicalities. Procedural error committed by investigators wherein suspect may employ trained or expert lawyers that can lead to dismissal of case. Or dealing with suspects who may evade investigation for lack of criminal history or potential for rehabilitation (Loopholes, 2024).

Theme 2: Organized Crime Groups

One of the greatest problems of police investigators is how to deal with Organized Crime Groups (OCGs). The main goal of investigation is the production of evidence; however, it is easier said than done for there are organized criminal activities going around inside and outside of the Country. In dealing with such groups (organized criminal groups) teamwork is important. But, there is no constructive method on how teams involving local and foreign investigation can do this, because there is a lack of basis for doing so.

A network study of the structure of cooperation among Organized Crime Groups (OCGs) in the United Kingdom came up with five key points, cooperation among OCGs is subject to constraints and tendency towards clustering; Drug trafficking is the only revenue-generating activity to have a structuring effect on the OCG cooperative language; Central structural positions in the cooperative network are associated with higher levels of violent behaviour; Relational analysis of criminal landscapes is the key to developing targeted interventions; and, Criminal groups are a crucial yet often neglected unit of analysis (Campana and Giovannetti, 2024).

Visser, Markus, and Weggeman (2023) did an analysis using their method of "sense-making", through this method criminal investigations makes improvement possible. This is necessary because investigations into organized crimes are becoming more complex owing to increasing cooperation between criminal networks originating in different countries.

Organized crime investigations require specialized techniques like surveillance, interviews, and informant use to understand the structure and scope of criminal groups. Jurisdictional challenges can arise, especially in transnational crime, with questions about where law enforcement can act (e.g., on high seas, in territorial waters). The private sector also plays a role, with clear reporting mechanisms needed for private actors to report organized crime activities and to ensure legal entities are held accountable for participation in serious crimes.

Theme 3: Political Pressure and Interference

One of the threats and contributory to a weak crime investigation is interference by politicians that could

either withhold their support in the investigation, or halt tin the process of investigation by their meddling. In order to understand political interference or non-legitimate interventions by politicians in government processes and programs. In the Philippines, specifically in crime investigation, historical and institutional (socio, economic, political, and cultural) context under which these systems operate is necessary to identify context-specific solutions. In the budget cycle, this is most notable during the budget legislation stage. Given these vulnerabilities, a comprehensive review of existing project and budget management systems is necessary with the view of reducing such abuses (Batalla, Tornen, and Magno,2019).

Theme 4: Communication and Linkages

The failure of complainants as well as witnesses could probably because they lack trust in the police, hence public participation should be done in cleansing the PNP ranks of erring and irregular performance of police in their localities (Caliwan, 2024; Argosino, 2023; Rita, 2023). This is just one condition for lack of participation. Another is failure to communicate as needed. If police officers are unaware of community resources that can help support them in their quest for witnesses; and do not know how to form linkages; then they could potentially be resolved through appropriate referrals (Koziarski et al., 2021). Unnecessarily escalating an encounter can be costly, both in terms of officer and public safety, and in terms of police resources (e.g., more time will likely need to be dedicated to the case over time (Semple et al., 2021).

In order to reach people and to inspire them to assist in the investigation, police should use information campaigns as their foremost strategy or the extensive use of communication mediums such as television, radio, newspaper; and police officers need the citizens they serve in the policing process, and the police officers must take part in the citizen process. Such cooperation between law enforcement and the community enables more comprehensive solutions to emerging neighbourhood.

Theme 5: Modernized Crime Investigation; Data-Based Information System

The participants have almost unanimously said that they lack knowledge and skills in modern crime investigation particularly in data-based information systems. In the era of technology particularly through the wide-web databases system, the lack of this hinders police investigation.

Skipanes, Dermatini, Franke, and Nisses (2025) said that in criminal investigation most information is often overlooked due to the manual analysis of vast amounts of text, and this could be associated with lack of a framework for information analysis. Thus in a paper they published in Norway. They categorized 742,135 investigative tasks and found out that the major information sources are Interviews and Digital Evidence. This finding was supported by (Partridge and Zaghlou 2023) who said that due to information overload, analysis of these data become difficult due to limited computational support by integrating it with computational methods from the realm of Artificial Intelligence (AI) (Devlin et al., 2019, Gao).

Theme 6: Cybercrimes

Admittedly, crime investigators accept that they have limited knowledge on dealing with cybercrimes. These cybercrimes encompass a wide range of offenses related to the misuse of computer systems and networks. These include unauthorized access (hacking), data and system interference, computer-related forgery and fraud, and content-related offenses like cybersex and child pornography, among others. These crimes are particularly true in the

Philippines context. .

Moreover, Cybercrime is a new global issue however world communities do not yet understand its impact, most particularly vulnerable are policing and law enforcement. One of such issues is lack of knowledge about cybercrime which makes law enforcement encounter difficulties in addressing cybercrimes (Curtis and Oxburgh, 2022). And in 2019, 1 million 'computer misuse' crimes were reportedly committed against households in England and Wales (National Crime Agency [NCA], 2020).

Whatever the cause, crime is now evolving and growing into the online realm, intensifying the downward trajectory of traditional crime incidence because the use of computer is the most popular mode of communication, it is becoming easier for people all over the world to commit cybercrime and on a larger scale (Caneppele and Aebi, 2019). Victims may, therefore, blame themselves or experience blame from others, in addition to potentially devastating consequences such as financial loss or damage to reputation and career (Button, 2020). Most victims of cybercrime report being affected emotionally, ranging from annoyance to depression, insomnia, anxiety and panic attacks (ONS, 2020). Boundaries are being crossed by the World Wide Web bridging the pathways to cybercrime. The crossing of boundaries, crimes connected to it are escalating (Curtis and Oxburgh, 2021).

Hawdon (2021) reports that the rise of world-wide web has revolutionized communication; however the seemingly innovation in communication has also brought the emergence of new crimes called "Cybercrime" or the use of computer technology or online networks to commit crimes ranges from fraud and identity theft to threats and intimidation. The economic costs of cybercrime do not account for the non-monetary harms caused by cyber violence. These are Cyber stalking, online sexual exploitation, cyber-harassment and bullying, threats of violence, and online violent extremism are also commonly committed acts of cyber violence (FBI, 2021).

Theme 7: Latest Trend on Handling Fraud Cases

There are several weaknesses and being confronted by police investigation (participants) such as Latest trends in laws and regulations, insufficient capability in handling fraud cases, analytical thinking, and investigation based on solid evidence, lack of motivation, disciplined crime investigator, external training. Investigative skills depend on the capability and abilities of police investigation; there is a need to upgrade technical skills and adapt to modern policing (Agunos, 2018); and must be sustained through continuous monitoring of programs and activities towards sustained quality training and practice (Magpantay, 2022). More so, Remotia, Magtaan and Dalogdog (2024) found out Physical injury as the highest case; however, it is the most dismissed case due to non-cooperation of the victim/complainant, despite criminal investigators are very highly capable as to their skills, attitude, and knowledge in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities.

Police investigators should have a variety of skills and qualities to be effective like being attentive to details, able to use crucial decision in building a case, able to communicate well with others and should be able to use information technology effectively among other needed skills (BC Campus. 2024; Bennell, Jenkins & Balsckovits et al, 2022). Thus police investigators should always relate and base their decision with organizational policies and laws before any actions are done. They should always be mindful of any decision that they make particularly in dealing with the people in the communication with the community; and most of all in all their dealings be with suspects or witnesses, they should control their emotions and treat them with respect befitting the right attitude of man in police uniform.

On the other hand, in terms of educational policy, Norman & Flemming (2021) about police education and

police professionalism in England and Wales using students enrolled in a policing degree, found that students' learning is associated with their rank. Senior-ranked students were more likely able to use and promote their newly acquired skills and knowledge in the workplace compared with lower-ranked students. Such findings may inform scholars' and practitioners' continued evaluation of police education reforms in England and Wales.

In this sense, for training institutions in the Philippines, students seeking police investigation should be treated equally regardless of their rank. This is because unfair treatment of trainees or students could lead to feelings of inferiority which could result in low performance during practice. Hence, educational or training institutions should also evaluate policies and practice in order to effect positive outcomes in the students or trainees.

Theme 8: Opportunity to get External Training

A study on the impact of training on use of force was conducted in England by Sanders, Bancroft & Hume (2024). This research evaluated how training impacts performance in police use of force in dealing with suspected criminals. A total of 1843 police officers participated in this study. The findings reveal statistically significant reductions in the use of force by police officers as a result of the training. Through this kind of training, reduction in the likelihood of injury to civilians, and no rise in the risk of harm to officers are expected. The conclusion was to incorporate this kind of training in the curriculum for police training. This study outlined the systematic approach taken to develop, implement, and evaluate the new police training curriculum, and highlight its implications for improving public and personal safety through evidence-based practices

Theme 9: Force Multipliers

A police force multiplier refers to individuals or organizations that enhance the effectiveness of law enforcement by contributing resources and support outside of traditional police roles, essentially acting as an amplifier of the police force's capabilities. This can include volunteers, community groups, or even private security companies working in coordination with the police. EPD (2024) In coordination with the NTF-ELCAC the Eastern Police District (2024) created the Force multipliers which pertains to the reorganization of the EPD Force Multipliers which seriously encourages the participation of the Tanods and other anti-crime task force in the noble cause of uplifting the welfare of the people and giving the Philippine National Police a graceful image in the Easter Part of the Metro Manila.

The Barangay peacekeeping Action Teams (BPAT) and the Barangay Peace Action Operations (BPO) are two examples that the Philippine National Police is giving our country the best possible policing system. They are called force multipliers. Since most crimes happen in the barangay, PNP can use members of BPATs to implement laws applicable in the barangay. By utilizing them, PNP can gather first-hand information, collect more evidence and preserve the crime scene necessary for identifying the perpetrator, filing the charges, prosecution and conviction (Gonzales, and Takeda, 2024)

In the advent of modern communication through the internet, technology can serve as force multipliers to help law enforcement form reactive policing to proactive one. Through the use of technology police departments can address crimes strategically and improve communication and ensure an increase in public safety. Through community support using their mobile devices, they serve as additional force multipliers to limited numbers of law enforcement (Rogers, 2024).

The presence of force multipliers or those who volunteer their support in ensuring peace and order is

established in communities should be sustained in the Philippines. However, there is a need to enhance their (force multipliers) motivation to do so. Since their presence in police investigation helps, they need to be given ample support, through training also, receiving incentives and granting of recognition for their active participation in police investigation.

Theme 10: Administration and Supervision

The major findings of this study under administration and supervision point to lack of funding and logistical support in addition to lack of supervision from the Organization. These results were supported by studies. According to Sharbak et al. 2021, organizational policies influence police performance, because these policies restrict the movement of police in performing their tasks. However, as indicated in the Standard Operating Procedure of the National Police Commission, the police organization assures that responsibility, rules and regulations, and other issues are continuously being reinforced with regards to the investigative process such as identifying the flow of coordination, responsibility and response on the investigation of cases.

Theme 11: Critical Thinking and Decisive Action

The ability to recognize stress in oneself, understand how it will impact performance, and mitigate its effects have all been identified as important competencies that are apt to improve an officer's ability to effectively manage potentially volatile police–public interactions (Baldwin et al., 2019) perceptual and attentional control, memory and communication (Giessing et al., 2019). Officers frequently rely on sound decision-making and problem-solving skills to perform successfully in the field (Preddy et al., 2020). A considerable attention is adaptive (or flexible) problem-solving. Collectively, research on this topic suggests that the problem-solving processes that experienced police officers engage in, both in simulated and real-world encounters, are often substantially different from the processes that characterize less experienced officers (Heusler and Sutter, 2020; Mangels et al., 2020).

Theme 12: Seek Outside Personal Growth

Police investigators in order to address issues connected with external forces, have seen to it that they maintain their self-sufficiency. To do this they continuously seek further training, especially associated with Organized Crime Groups (OGCs) as provided by external trainers. Aside from this, they maintain continuous coordination and collaboration with the community, especially, witnesses in order to motivate them to participate in resolving crime up to the court jurisdiction.

The need for police investigators to possess skills in implementation of guidelines based from scientific basis was the topic for (Kleygrewe, Oudejas, Koejk and Hutter (2022), and to do this continuous training is important (Shipton, 2019); and development of training curricula should align with current development in investigative fields (Koerner & Staller, 2021; Staller et al., 2021),; Organizational policies seem to have this effect by restricting the conditions under which certain actions, and bounded by knowledge of community resources (Koziarski et al., 2021; Semple et al., 2022).

Theme 13: Self-Care is cruicial for investigators

Self-care is crucial for police crime investigators in the Philippines to maintain their well-being and effectiveness, especially when dealing with the emotional and physical stress of investigations. This includes

prioritizing mental health, physical health, and work-life balance, as well as seeking support from colleagues and resources. This is because crime investigation is a very stressful profession; and it also involves much diligence in implementing rules and regulations, and observing the right protocol too for example on judicious use of resources and upgrading of skills on modern crime investigation.

Papagayo (2024) found out that that work-life balance in stress management, self-management, and time management was high, and change management was very high. In contrast, the level of self -determination in terms of autonomy was high, including competence and relatedness, was very high. Lastly, the level of psychological well-being in self-acceptance, positive relations with others, environmental mastery, and personal growth was very high. In contrast, purpose in life and autonomy were high.

CONCLUSION

Crime investigation in the Philippines is partly contribute by the competencies of the investigators. As indicated form the findings they lack sufficient trainings in modern criminal investigation when compared globally. This lack is associated with lack of modern technological gadgets and there's also a gap in handling Cyber Crimes. Hence, there is a need for enhancement in specialized training, practical experience, encompassing legal knowledge, investigative techniques, and interpersonal skills. The application Artificial Intelligence (AI) could benefit police investigation, if knowledge of such will be added to the standards of qualification of investigators.

Aside from lack of competencies as indicated above, crime investigators' operation is being affected by external factors such as issues with jurisdiction and boundaries related to the operations of Organized Crime Groups (OCG) which could be addressed by collaborating with different agencies through local and international partnerships

On the other hand, under internal forces, there are gaps to be addressed under weakness such, Lack of financial support and logistical support; Harassment in work, Lack of relevant training; Lack of Supervision; and failure to comply with legal requirements and, Lack of Motivation; however under Strength, there was contrasting perspective on funding because it was also manifested that there is sufficient materials and funding. Moreover, there is hierarchical order of leadership, under strength, open communication through information sharing and established communication channels and availability of manual of operation. On the other hand, strength lies on the Attitude domains namely; observance of moral practice; observance of human rights; presence of disciplined police investigator; and investigations were based on solid evidence.

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

The programs and objectives included in the proposed strategic action plan are: Trainings conferences Seminars Professional development Courses to upgrade legal knowledge, investigative techniques, and interpersonal skills and application Artificial Intelligence (AI); enhancing linkages to Integrates crime reports, surveillance data, and incident response details to improve real-time tracking and intervention strategies; Active campaign against CGs, OCGs; Inter-Agency Cooperation, to encourage residents to report all suspicious movements of individuals by mobile applications or online platforms for appropriate police response; Modernized crime Investigation, to Invest in modern surveillance equipment such as CCTV systems with facial recognition technology to enhance law enforcement visibility and improve crime prevention; and, Moral Recovery Program, to maintain and sustain observance of moral and ethical police investigation practices.

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