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Impact of Civil Military Operation as Non-Combatant on Local Governance and Community Development: Strategic Improvement

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Abstract

This dissertation employed a descriptive-evaluative design to examine the impact of Civil Military Operations (CMOs) on local governance and community development in Aurora Province, Philippines. Focusing on the three CMO pillars—Psychological Operations, Civil Affairs, and Public Affairs—the study assessed their implementation and effectiveness beyond counterinsurgency functions, emphasizing their developmental contributions. Quantitative data were gathered through structured surveys from 380 stakeholders, including local officials, military personnel, and community members. Using SPSS, the study found significant correlations between stakeholder awareness, participation, and the perceived effectiveness of CMO initiatives. Analysis at the barangay level revealed varying levels of implementation and effectiveness across communities, indicating uneven delivery of CMO activities. The research also evaluated socio-economic outcomes, identifying both positive effects on infrastructure, livelihood projects, and community well-being, as well as negative outcomes related to unmet needs and gaps in responsiveness. Based on these insights, the study developed a strategic framework aimed at improving CMO performance through enhanced community engagement and stronger alignment with local development priorities. This framework provides practical recommendations for military planners, policymakers, and local government units. Overall, the study offers an evidence-based assessment of CMO operations in Aurora Province, contributing to a deeper understanding of their role in promoting sustainable community development.

Keywords: *Civil Military Operations, Non-Combatant, Strategic Improvement, Psychological Operations*

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INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Sustainable development remains a critical challenge, particularly in regions where security issues and weak governance impede progress. The interplay between security and development has been well-documented, emphasizing their mutual influence. In areas with fragile governance systems, the military often assumes a dual role—not only safeguarding national security but also supporting developmental initiatives. In this context, Civil-Military Operations (CMOs) have emerged as a key strategy for engaging communities, building trust, enhancing stability, and addressing long-standing developmental gaps in underserved and conflict-vulnerable areas.

In the Philippines, inclusive growth continues to be elusive in rural, impoverished, and geographically isolated areas. Aurora Province in Central Luzon exemplifies these challenges, facing recurring natural disasters, limited infrastructure, and weak institutional presence. In response to these conditions, the AFP has implemented various CMO initiatives across the province. These operations focus on infrastructure development, disaster preparedness, health and education programs, and livelihood assistance—aimed at enhancing local governance, fostering social cohesion, and uplifting community welfare.

This study sought to fill this gap by systematically evaluating the role of CMOs in promoting governance and community development in Aurora Province. It examined the implementation of CMO activities across three functional pillars: Psychological Operations, Civil Affairs, and Public Affairs. The study analyzed their effectiveness, identified variations across barangays, and assessed their socio-economic impacts. By focusing on barangay-level stakeholders, the research aimed to provide grounded, actionable insights for aligning CMO strategies with localized development priorities. Over the past two decades, Civil-Military Operations (CMOs) have gained recognition as vital tools for addressing complex challenges in fragile and conflict-affected areas. Global organizations such as the United Nations (UN), NATO, and the World Bank have highlighted the interconnection between security, governance, and development in achieving long-term sustainability. Initially military-centered, CMOs have evolved into multi-dimensional strategies encompassing humanitarian assistance, disaster response, and capacity-building. Another critical gap is the limited research on CMOs in non-conflict and hybrid environments, where governance voids and socio-economic challenges persist without outright conflict. In these settings, CMOs could serve as non-combatant mechanisms for bridging governance gaps, reducing poverty, and fostering inclusivity. However, the lack of studies examining CMO implementation in such contexts hinders understanding of their potential as drivers of socio-economic development. In the Philippines, Civil-Military Operations (CMOs) are a vital mechanism for addressing the intersection of security, governance, and development. As a cornerstone of the Armed Forces of the Philippines' (AFP) operations, CMOs aim to foster trust, enhance collaboration with communities, and contribute to national development. These operations encompass diverse activities, including infrastructure projects, livelihood programs, disaster response, and education initiatives, particularly in underserved regions where government presence is limited. Most government reports and academic studies on CMOs in the Philippines focus on their counterinsurgency and peacekeeping roles. For example, the AFP's "Bayanihan" program adopted a whole-of-nation approach to counterinsurgency, using CMOs to strengthen ties with local communities in conflict-affected areas. While some success was observed in reducing insurgency and fostering military-community relationships, evaluations primarily emphasized short-term security outcomes rather than long-term socio-economic or governance benefits. Aurora Province, situated in Central Luzon, serves as an ideal context for examining the developmental role of Civil-Military

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Operations (CMOs). Characterized by its rural and coastal landscapes, the province faces persistent socio-economic and environmental challenges, including limited access to basic services, inadequate infrastructure, and high vulnerability to natural disasters. Geographic isolation further restricts economic opportunities and access to government support, exacerbating inequalities. The province also presents unique socio-political dynamics that influence the implementation of CMOs. Although insurgency-related conflicts have largely diminished, developmental challenges persist, including limited livelihood opportunities and weak community engagement. CMOs have sought to address these issues through livelihood programs and community-building activities. However, barriers such as limited community participation, inadequate alignment with local needs, and resource constraints undermine the effectiveness of these efforts.

Theoretical Framework

This study comprehensively uses Systems Theory, Social Exchange Theory, and Developmental Governance Theory, combined with the philosophies of Pragmatism and Utilitarianism, to build a comprehensive framework for understanding the role and impact of inland military operations in local governance and community development. By integrating the above theories and philosophical ideas, this study is able to fully examine the operation mechanism, relationship construction and the achievement of development goals of inland military operations in Aurora Province, and provide a theoretical and practical basis for understanding and optimizing civil-military cooperation.

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to assess the effect of non-combat and humanitarian action of the state through Civil Military Operations (CMOs) on local governance and community development particularly in Aurora Province.

1. What is the level of implementation of the primary components and activities of Civil Military Operations in Aurora in terms of the following pillars:
    a. Psychological Operations
    b. Civil Affairs
    c. Public Affairs?
2. What is the level of effectiveness of the components and activities of Civil Military Operations in terms of the identified pillars:
3. What are the impacts of these operations on the socio-economic conditions of communities?
4. Are there significant differences in the level of effectiveness of the components and activities of Civil Military Operations in terms of the identified pillars according to barangays?
5. Are there significant differences in the level of implementation of the primary components and activities of Civil Military Operations in Aurora in terms of the identified pillars according to barangays?
6. Based on the findings of the study, what strategic framework or development program can be proposed to improve the effectiveness of CMOs in Aurora Province?

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METHODS

Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive-evaluative quantitative research design to analyze and assess the impact of Civil-Military Operations (CMOs) on local governance and community development in Aurora Province. This approach was chosen to provide a detailed examination of CMO activities, focusing on their implementation, effectiveness, and outcomes.

Research Method

This study employed a quantitative research method to analyze the impact of Civil-Military Operations (CMOs) on local governance and community development in Aurora Province. The quantitative approach was chosen for its ability to provide objective, measurable, and statistically reliable data to support the study's evaluation of CMO activities.

Population of the Study

This study included a total of 380 crucial stakeholders who were directly involved in or affected by Civil-Military Operations (CMOs) in Aurora Province.

Locale of the Study

The study is conducted in the Province of Aurora, located in Central Luzon, Philippines, which serves as the primary locale due to its unique socio-political and geographic characteristics.

Scope And Limitation of the Study

The primary purpose of the study was to assess the effect of non-combat and humanitarian action of the state through Civil Military Operations (CMOs) on local governance and community development particularly in Aurora Province. The study focused on CMOs' role in critical areas like infrastructure, disaster response, and livelihood programs.

Data Gathering Tools

A structured questionnaire was used in this study as the primary research instrument to assess the impact of Civil-Military Operations (CMOs) on local governance and community development in Aurora Province.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data-gathering procedure followed a structured and methodical approach to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the results. The process began with securing the necessary approvals and formal coordination with relevant authorities, including local government units in Aurora Province and the 91st Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army.

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Treatment of the Data

The data gathered in this study were subjected to systematic statistical treatment, tailored to the type of information collected through the structured questionnaire. Raw data from both paper-based and online questionnaires were first encoded into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software for cleaning and analysis.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations of this study were guided by respect for participants, confidentiality and transparency held, which protected the participants' rights and welfare.

Dissemination of the Research Outcome

The dissemination plan for the research outcome was prepared with particular attention to the need to deliver the findings to relevant stakeholders and contribute to actual improvement in the implementation of Civil Military Operations

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Table 1.

Demographic Profile of Respondents

	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1. Age	18 - 29	202	53.16%
	30 - 39	106	27.89%
	40 - 49	59	15.53%
	50 - 59	13	3.42%
2. Gender	Male	339	89.21%
	Female	41	10.79%
3. Role in the Community	AFP	34	8.95%
	Barangay Leader	16	4.21%
	CAA	11	2.89%
	CAFGU	12	3.16%
	DND	1	0.26%
	Government Employee	19	5%
	Local Government Official	128	33.68%
	Resident	156	41.05%
	None	3	0.79%
4. Years of Residency	Less than 5 years	126	33.16%
	5-10 years	71	18.68%

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	11-20 years	82	21.58%
	More than 20 years	101	26.58%
5. Engagement in CMO Activities	Direct Participant	222	58.42%
	Indirect Beneficiary	22	5.79%
	Observer	131	34.47%
	Monitoring	1	0.26%
	None	4	1.05%

The majority of the respondents were young (18-29 years old) and male (89.21%), with residents comprising the largest group (41.05%) followed by local government officials. The survey included both formal stakeholders and ordinary citizens, with 58.42% reporting direct participation in Civil-Military Operations (CMOs). A significant portion had lived in the community for less than 5 years (33.16%) while another had lived there more than 20 (26.58%), creating a broad range of viewpoints. This demographic profile emphasizes perspectives of younger, male, directly involved inhabitants.

Table 2.

Level of Implementation of Psychological Operations

Implementation of Psychological Operations	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. Information drives promoting peace and unity were conducted.	3.93	1.00	Implemented
2. Communication materials were visible and culturally appropriate	3.88	0.96	Implemented
3. Youth forums/seminars were conducted.	3.87	1.01	Implemented
4. Military presence included trust-building efforts.	4.01	0.95	Implemented
OVERALL	3.92	0.89	Implemented

Participants generally responded favorably to the implementation of psychological operations (PsyOps), with "Military presence included trust-building efforts" receiving the highest rating. Information drives promoting peace, culturally appropriate communication materials, and youth forums/seminars also scored high. The overall mean score for PsyOps was 3.92 (SD = 0.89), categorized as "implemented." This reflects a strong awareness among community members of the military's efforts to psychologically integrate and harmonize with the local population, highlighting the vital role of PsyOps in fostering trust and cooperation, suggesting a holistic approach to winning community support, in line with the effective non-combatant community outreach model in the Philippines.

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Table 3.

Level of Implementation of Civil Affairs

Implementation of Civil Affairs	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
6. Medical/dental/veterinary missions were held.	3.86	1.00	Implemented
6. Infrastructure projects (e.g., roads, schools) were implemented.	3.83	0.99	Implemented
7. Disaster preparedness programs were conducted.	3.98	0.97	Implemented
8. Livelihood or skills training programs were delivered.	3.92	0.99	Implemented
OVERALL	3.90	0.90	Implemented

Respondents rated the implementation of civil affairs activities positively, with "Disaster preparedness programs were conducted" scoring highest, reflecting the military's responsiveness to local vulnerabilities. The community also valued "Livelihood or skills training programs were delivered." While "Medical/dental/veterinary missions were held" were also rated favorably, "Infrastructure projects (e.g., roads, schools) were implemented" scored slightly lower. The overall mean rating for civil affairs was 3.90 (SD = 0.90), categorized as "Implemented," suggesting that these initiatives, including disaster management, livelihood, health, and infrastructure, have been widely experienced by the community and address critical needs. While military support enables development, there are concerns about the sustainability and transparency of such initiatives.

Table 4.

Level of Implementation of Public Affairs

Implementation of Public Affairs	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
9. CMOs coordinated with local leaders and officials.	4.01	0.94	Implemented
10. Programs were clearly communicated to the community.	3.99	0.97	Implemented
11. Military teams responded to local concerns.	4.03	0.90	Implemented
12. Feedback or consultation was part of activities.	3.95	0.93	Implemented
OVERALL	4.00	0.88	Implemented

Respondents gave strong ratings to the implementation of public affairs activities, with "Military teams responded to local concerns" scoring highest, followed closely by "CMOs coordinated with local leaders and officials," demonstrating responsiveness and collaboration. Other components, such as clear program communication and the inclusion of feedback, also received high scores, though there is room to strengthen consultation. The overall mean was 4.00 (SD = 0.88), categorized as "Implemented," indicating effective public engagement. These results affirm that public affairs activities are central to building trust and transparency. While communication is strong, deeper participatory practices could be further enhanced.

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Table 5.

Effectiveness of Psychological Operations

Effectiveness of Psychological Operations	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
13. Campaigns improved public understanding of AFP's peace role	4.09	0.92	Effective
14. Activities enhanced cooperation with the community.	4.05	0.89	Effective
15. Trust in the military increased.	4.12	0.89	Effective
OVERALL	4.09	0.86	Effective

Respondents perceived the psychological operations component of Civil-Military Operations (CMOs) as effective, with the statement "Trust in the military increased" receiving the highest rating, followed closely by "Campaigns improved public understanding of AFP's peace role" and "Activities enhanced cooperation with the community." The overall mean for psychological operations effectiveness was 4.09 (SD = 0.86), placing it in the "Effective" range, and indicating that it functions as intended. The results suggest trust, understanding, and cooperation are strengthened and are key precursors to sustainable peace and governance, supporting the continuation and scaling of psychological operations, especially in areas where the military seeks to transition from security enforcement to developmental support.

Table 6.

Effectiveness of Civil Affairs

Effectiveness of Civil Affairs	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
16. Services addressed urgent needs.	3.98	0.95	Effective
17. Infrastructure benefited many residents.	3.89	0.98	Effective
18. Livelihood support promoted self-sufficiency.	3.97	0.94	Effective
OVERALL	3.95	0.89	Effective

Respondents positively rated the effectiveness of civil affairs in Civil-Military Operations (CMOs). "Services addressed urgent needs" scored highest, followed by "Livelihood support promoted self-sufficiency," indicating timely and relevant programs meeting critical needs. "Infrastructure benefited many residents" received the lowest score, suggesting its reach or visibility may be less prominent. The overall mean score was 3.95 (SD = 0.89), indicating tangible differences in people's lives. While social services are well-received, long-term physical developments may require more investment or visibility. Civil affairs remains a vital mechanism in bridging gaps in governance, particularly in remote or marginalized areas.

Table 7.

Effectiveness of Public Affairs

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Effectiveness of Civil Affairs	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
16. Services addressed urgent needs.	3.98	0.95	Effective
17. Infrastructure benefited many residents.	3.89	0.98	Effective
18. Livelihood support promoted self-sufficiency.	3.97	0.94	Effective
OVERALL	3.95	0.89	Effective

Respondents rated the effectiveness of public affairs in Civil-Military Operations (CMOs) highly. "Military respected local customs and culture" received the highest score, followed closely by "Communication with stakeholders was effective," indicating sensitivity to local traditions and successful information dissemination. "Information was timely and accessible" received a slightly lower rating, suggesting room for improvement. The overall mean score was 4.04 (SD = 0.88), indicating that public affairs strategies are working well and are among the top-performing components of CMOs. Public affairs are impactful in improving community perception and engagement, and cultural sensitivity is especially effective.

Table 8.

Perceived Socio-Economic Impact of CMOs

Effectiveness of Civil Affairs	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
16. Services addressed urgent needs.	3.98	0.95	Effective
17. Infrastructure benefited many residents.	3.89	0.98	Effective
18. Livelihood support promoted self-sufficiency.	3.97	0.94	Effective
OVERALL	3.95	0.89	Effective

Respondents rated the overall socio-economic impact of Civil-Military Operations (CMOs) positively. "Local security improved" and "Community trust in government improved" received the highest ratings, indicating CMOs' role in stabilizing communities and reinforcing public confidence. "Opportunities for economic growth increased" and "CMOs contributed to improved governance" also scored high. "Access to basic services increased" was rated favorably, while "CMOs helped unify diverse community groups" scored lowest, suggesting challenges in building cross-sectoral unity. The overall mean was 4.06 (SD = 0.83), confirming a positive socio-economic influence, with the need to strengthen inclusive strategies and diversify stakeholder engagement in future CMO plans.

Table 9.

Relationship Between CMO Implementation and Socio-Economic Impact

Relationship with the Socio-economic Impact of CMOs	Mean	SD	Pearson Correlation (r)	p	Interpretation

Implementation of Psychological Operations	3.918	0.893	0.793	p < 0.01	Significant
Implementation of Civil Affairs	3.898	0.905	0.776	p < 0.01	Significant
Implementation of Public Affairs	3.995	0.878	0.822	p < 0.01	Significant
Effectiveness of Psychological Operations	4.087	0.855	0.843	p < 0.01	Significant
Effectiveness of Civil Affairs	3.946	0.893	0.823	p < 0.01	Significant
Effectiveness of Public Affairs	4.035	0.883	0.841	p < 0.01	Significant

The data reveals statistically significant, positive relationships between the implementation and effectiveness of Civil-Military Operations (CMOs) and their perceived socio-economic impacts. The effectiveness of psychological operations (r = 0.843) and public affairs (r = 0.841) showed the highest correlations, indicating that when perceived as more effective, the benefits in governance, public services, and economic opportunities increase. Implementation of public affairs (r = 0.822) and psychological operations (r = 0.793) also showed strong relationships. Civil affairs, both in implementation (r = 0.776) and effectiveness (r = 0.823), demonstrated significant positive relationships as well. All p-values were below 0.01, confirming statistical significance, indicating that better designed and executed CMO activities lead to more positive perceptions of community impact. Integrating quality assurance, participatory design, and feedback mechanisms is essential for future CMO initiatives.

Table 10.

Regression Analysis on the Impact of CMO Components

Regression Analysis	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	0.862	0.111		7.736	0.000
Psychological Operations	0.259	0.065	0.279	3.991	0.000
Civil Affairs	0.046	0.068	0.051	0.684	0.494
Public Affairs	0.502	0.068	0.530	7.427	0.000
$r^2 = 0.696$					
f = 287.589					
p < 0.01					

The regression model explains 69.6% of the variance in perceived socio-economic impact based on CMO components (F = 287.589, p < 0.01). Public affairs had the strongest effect (B = 0.502, p < 0.01), followed by

psychological operations (B = 0.259, p < 0.01). Civil affairs did not yield a statistically significant result (p = 0.494). Public affairs and psychological operations are critical for community trust, collaboration, and perceived progress, while civil affairs may require improved targeting, visibility, or integration with other programs to realize their full impact.

Table 11.

The Difference Between The Level Of Implementation Of The Primary

Mean			**F stat**	**P value**	**Verbal Interpretation**
Psychological Implementation	**Civil Implementation**	**Public Implementation**	1.26	0.284	Not Significant
3.918	3.898	3.995			

The implementation levels of Psychological, Civil, and Public Affairs across barangays in Aurora Province are relatively uniform, with no statistically significant differences (F = 1.26, p = 0.284). Public Implementation scored slightly higher, but the lack of variance suggests standardized operational guidelines and consistent coordination. While uniformity indicates equitable resource distribution and a well-integrated CMO framework, it may also overlook specific local needs, highlighting the importance of incorporating community feedback mechanisms and tailoring approaches. Future improvements should focus on needs-based CMO planning, balancing central coordination with local adaptation to enhance responsiveness and sustainability.

Table 12.

Differences in Perceived Effectiveness and Impact by Age Group

	Mean				F (380)	p
	18 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59		

Effectiveness of Psychological Operations	4.05	4.03	4.21	4.49	1.661	0.175
Effectiveness of Civil Affairs	3.90	3.90	4.08	4.44	2.036	0.108
Effectiveness of Public Affairs	4.00	3.95	4.23	4.46	2.407	0.067
Perceived Impact	4.03	4.00	4.21	4.42	1.808	0.145

Respondents aged 50–59 showed the highest mean ratings for CMO effectiveness and socio-economic impacts, while those aged 18–29 had slightly lower scores. Although there were apparent trends in mean values, none of the differences across age groups were statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). Age does not substantially influence how people perceive the effectiveness or impact of CMOs, suggesting that current strategies resonate well across age groups, though tailoring some aspects of CMOs to appeal to youth could be beneficial.

Table 13.

Differences in Perceived Effectiveness and Impact by Gender

	Mean		t (380)	p
	Male	Female		
Effectiveness of Psychological Operations	4.06	4.28	2.273	0.132
Effectiveness of Civil Affairs	3.93	4.11	1.478	0.225
Effectiveness of Public Affairs	4.01	4.25	2.784	0.096
Perceived Impact	4.05	4.17	0.721	0.396

Female respondents consistently provided slightly higher mean ratings than male respondents across all variables related to CMO effectiveness and socio-economic impact, but none of the gender-based differences were statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). The programs appear to be inclusive and equitable in their perceived benefits, indicating a strength in designing gender-responsive civil-military engagements.

Table 14.

Differences in Perceived Effectiveness and Impact by Role in the Community.

	Mean	F (38	p

	AFP	Barangay Leader	CAA	CAFGU	DND	Government Employee	Local Government Official	Resident	None	0)	
Effectiveness of Psychological Operations	4.33	4.17	3.94	4.31	5.00	4.42	3.98	4.06	4.00	1.296	0.244
Effectiveness of Civil Affairs	4.29	4.06	3.82	4.08	5.00	4.30	3.85	3.89	3.78	1.589	0.126
Effectiveness of Public Affairs	4.31	4.15	3.94	4.19	5.00	4.49	3.90	4.01	3.67	1.765	0.083
Perceived Impact	4.34	4.19	4.05	4.15	5.00	4.45	3.96	4.02	3.72	1.596	0.124

The Department of National Defense (DND) respondent gave the highest mean scores, but this is based on a single data point. Government employees and AFP personnel showed high regard for CMOs, while residents gave more moderate scores. Despite the range of mean scores, none of the differences among roles were statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). CMOs are generally perceived positively across all community roles, with greater appreciation among those more directly involved in governance or security.

Table 15.

Differences in Perceived Effectiveness and Impact by Years of Residency.

	Mean				F (380)	p
	Less than 5 years	5-10 years	11-20 years	More than 20 years		
Effectiveness of Psychological Operations	4.04	4.08	4.17	4.08	0.366	0.777
Effectiveness of Civil Affairs	3.91	3.93	3.97	3.98	0.142	0.935
Effectiveness of Public Affairs	4.03	4.01	4.06	4.04	0.038	0.990
Perceived Impact	4.04	4.05	4.04	4.12	0.190	0.903

Long-term residents (over 20 years) rated civil affairs and perceived impact highest, while newer residents (less than 5 years) gave slightly lower ratings, but all scores were within the "Effective" and "Agree" categories. Despite these variations, none of the differences across the four residency groups reached statistical significance ($p > 0.05$). Length of residency does not significantly influence how people perceive CMOs, suggesting that programs are

accessible and meaningful to both newer and long-established community members.

Table 16.

Differences in Perceived Effectiveness and Impact by Level

	Mean					F (380)	p
	Direct Participant	Indirect Beneficiary	Observer	Monitoring	None		
Effectiveness of Psychological Operations	4.19	3.86	3.95	5.00	4.08	2.343	0.054
Effectiveness of Civil Affairs	4.05	3.76	3.80	5.00	3.83	2.247	0.064
Effectiveness of Public Affairs	4.12	3.77	3.93	5.00	3.92	1.787	0.131
Perceived Impact	4.18	3.80	3.91	5.00	3.46	3.804	0.005

Respondents who reported "Monitoring" gave perfect scores, but this is based on a single individual. Direct participants rated CMOs higher than observers and indirect beneficiaries. The "None" group (no engagement) reported the lowest perceived impact. There is a significant difference in perceived socio-economic impact based on engagement level (F
= 3.804, p = 0.005). Increased engagement leads to a more favorable view of CMO effectiveness and impact, highlighting the importance of inclusive, participatory programs.

1. Strategic Framework or Development

Program Community-Centric Communication

1. Localized Communication Platforms The military should invest in more localized communication platforms to ensure that information reaches all segments of the community. This includes utilizing local radio stations, community newsletters, and social media groups that are popular in Aurora Province.
2. Community Feedback Mechanisms Establish regular town hall meetings, collaborative planning sessions, and accessible updates on ongoing programs. This will allow the community to voice their concerns and contribute to program development.
3. Partnering with Local Leaders Engage local leaders and civil society groups as partners in designing and disseminating messages. This will help bridge any gaps in understanding or participation, especially among younger or newer residents

Enhanced Service Delivery

1. Visibility and Reach of Civil Affairs Programs Scale up and better publicize livelihood, health, and

infrastructure initiatives. This can be achieved through targeted campaigns, success stories, and collaborations with local government agencies.

2. Inclusive Targeting Consider more inclusive targeting for civil affairs programs, particularly for underserved barangays. Diversify service options to meet the specific needs of each community.
3. Integration with Government Programs Integrate civil affairs with other government programs to increase efficiency and long-term viability. This will ensure that CMOs complement and support existing development initiatives.

Community Participation

1. Volunteer Opportunities Create volunteer opportunities for community members to participate in CMO activities. This will foster a sense of ownership and responsibility.
2. Advisory Committees Establish advisory committees composed of community representatives to provide guidance and feedback on CMO programs.
3. Youth-Focused Engagement Implement youth-focused engagement programs to encourage participation from younger generations. This will ensure that CMOs remain relevant and impactful for future generations.

Trust-Building and Misinformation Countermeasures

1. Culturally Sensitive Messaging Continue to emphasize culturally sensitive, trust-based messaging in psychological operations. This includes campaigns that promote peace, unity, and civic cooperation.
2. Addressing Misinformation Address any misinformation or community concerns through transparent communication and educational initiatives.
3. Partnering with Influencers Partner with educators, religious leaders, and youth groups to amplify these messages. This will help build trust and counter any negative perceptions of the military.

Data-Driven Planning and Evaluation

1. Regular Evaluation Adopt regular, data-driven evaluation processes to assess the effectiveness of CMO programs. This will help identify areas for improvement and ensure accountability.
2. Key Performance Indicators Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) to track progress and guide adjustments in strategy and resource allocation.
3. Institutionalization Institutionalize CMO evaluation and data-driven planning to ensure that CMOs remain aligned with the needs of Aurora Province.

Collaborative Partnerships

1. Engage Local NGOs and Community Organizations Form partnerships with local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community groups to leverage their expertise and understanding of local needs. These organizations can serve as bridges between the military and the community, facilitating trust and cooperation.
2. Interagency Collaboration Foster collaboration between military, government agencies, and civil society by establishing joint task forces that address specific community issues. This integration can enhance

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resource sharing and improve the effectiveness of CMO initiatives.

3. Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs): Initiate public-private partnerships to mobilize resources for community development projects. These collaborations can help fund infrastructure improvements, health services, and educational programs that benefit the community

Capacity Building and Training

1. Civil-Military Cooperation Training Programs Develop comprehensive training programs focused on civil-military cooperation for military personnel. These programs should cover topics such as community engagement strategies, cultural awareness, and conflict resolution techniques.
2. Local Leadership Development Invest in training local leaders and community representatives in governance, negotiation, and project management. Empowering local leaders can enhance community resilience and ensure that CMO initiatives are sustainable.
3. Simulation Exercises Conduct simulation exercises that mimic real-life scenarios to prepare military personnel for interactions with the community. These exercises can help build skills in negotiation and conflict management while fostering empathy and understanding.

Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Establish Clear Metrics for Success Define specific, measurable indicators to evaluate the success of CMO initiatives. Regularly assess these metrics to identify areas for improvement and ensure accountability
2. Feedback Mechanisms Implement robust feedback mechanisms that allow community members to voice their opinions on CMO activities. This can include surveys, focus groups, and community forums, helping to ensure that programs are responsive to local needs.
3. After-Action Reviews (AARs) Conduct AARs following CMO initiatives to analyze what worked well and what did not. This reflective practice can foster continuous learning and improvement in program delivery.

Long-Term Engagement Strategies

1. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Alignment Align CMO initiatives with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to ensure that efforts contribute to broader development objectives. This alignment can enhance legitimacy and support for military operations in the community.
2. Community Ownership of Projects Encourage community ownership of CMO projects by involving local stakeholders in the planning and implementation phases. This can enhance commitment and ensure that initiatives are culturally relevant and sustainable.
3. Crisis Preparedness and Response Training Provide training for community members on crisis preparedness and response. This can empower communities to respond effectively to emergencies, thereby enhancing resilience and reducing reliance on military support during crisis.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

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This study assessed the implementation and impact of Civil-Military Operations (CMOs) – psychological operations, civil affairs, and public affairs – on community development and security. Stakeholders agreed CMOs improved community conditions. Trust-building efforts and community cooperation with the military were credited to psychological operations. Effective communications, cultural sensitivity, and transparency were noted in public affairs. There was a strong, positive relationship between CMO implementation and perceived socioeconomic improvements. Public affairs had the greatest impact followed by psychological operations, both of which have communication, responsiveness and trust-building at their heart. Community engagement also significantly shaped perceptions, as direct participants reported more favorable views. The study affirms the military's evolving role in governance and community welfare with a strong recommendation that sustainable and scaled CMOs are necessary as a critical part of civil-military collaboration.

Conclusion

This study affirms the value of Civil-Military Operations (CMOs) as effective instruments for stability, development, and trust-building. CMOs are perceived as essential components of community governance, transforming military presence into a constructive force. Key to their success are psychological operations, public affairs, and community engagement. Although civil affairs address basic needs, greater integration and visibility are needed. Strong positive ratings were found across diverse groups, but direct engagement significantly enhances perceptions. Statistical modeling is shown to be valuable in assessing and improving CMO strategies, and emphasis should be put on using resources strategically, with psychological operations and public affairs as key investment areas. Therefore, CMOs must continue to adapt, involve stakeholders, and align with national development goals for sustained relevance and effectiveness.

Recommendations

1. Public affairs initiatives should be strengthened through greater community engagement. This includes investing in localized communication platforms (local radio, newsletters, social media), establishing feedback mechanisms (town hall meetings, collaborative planning), and partnering with local leaders and civil society. These actions will improve transparency, responsiveness, and public trust.
2. The visibility and reach of civil affairs programs should be enhanced. This entails scaling up livelihood, health, and infrastructure initiatives and publicizing success stories. More inclusive targeting, diversification of services for underserved barangays, and integration with government programs are also recommended to improve efficiency.
3. Broader community participation in CMO activities should be encouraged through volunteer opportunities, advisory committees, youth-focused engagement, and citizen reporting, which allows for improved accountability and strengthens relationships. It is essential to ensure that participation is accessible across age, gender, and role, while involving the community at all stages of CMO projects.
4. Psychological operations must prioritize building trust and countering misinformation. Emphasize culturally sensitive, trust-based messaging promoting peace, unity, and civic cooperation. This can be achieved by partnering with educators, religious leaders, and youth groups to amplify messaging and strengthen ties with the communities involved.

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5. CMO evaluation and data-driven planning must be institutionalized. This involves adopting regular evaluation processes, establishing key performance indicators (KPIs), and using results to guide strategy and resource allocation. The implementation of data-driven planning and evaluation will help the CMO's remain adaptive and aligned with a continuous changing landscape to be aligned and effective in the community.

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