



## POLICE OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND CRIME COMMISSION IN A CITY IN THE PHILIPPINES

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### ABSTRACT

*Police organizations have conducted operational activities to reduce the opportunity for would-be criminals to commit crimes. This operational activity includes patrol, traffic management, and investigation. In this study, the extent of police operational activities in Pagadian City, Zamboanga del Sur, Philippines, was evaluated to determine the extent of police operational activities and to test the association between the crime rate and the extent of police operation activities. This study utilized a quantitative descriptive research method. The respondents were 142 active police officers who were chosen purposively by employing total enumeration. The gathering of data was done using a self-made questionnaire, which underwent validation and reliability testing. The statistical tools used were frequency count, mean computation, percentage, and regression analysis. The results revealed that more respondents were 31-35 years old and above. Most of them were male, bachelor's degree holders, attended training and seminars for 50 hours, and served the police force for 15 years and below. Patrolling and investigation were found to be much observable while traffic management was observable. As for index crime, there were more crimes against the person committed than crimes against property. As for non-index crimes, there were more other non-index crimes compared to the violation of special laws. Patrolling has a positive influence on the commission and non-commission of both index and non-index crimes. This study also recommends intensive patrolling on hot-spot areas for criminal presence and activity, strengthening traffic management practices, procurement of traffic lights, improving traffic signs, and intensive implementation of traffic laws and regulations.*

*Keywords: Police Function, Operational Activities, Crime Prevention, Police Core Functions*

### INTRODUCTION

Police organization's function is to conduct activities to protect peoples' rights and properties. Conducted activities such as patrol, traffic management, and investigation were governed by laws and regulations to promote the welfare and protect persons' rights. In strengthening the police force in the country, several laws were also promulgated to develop the organization.

The passing of Republic Act No. 6975, 1990 merged and modernized the Integrated National Police (INP) and the Philippine

Constabulary (PC) comprising the Philippine National Police, national in scope and civilian character. The primary objective is to enforce laws and preserve peace and order, a requisite for development.

In compliance with its mandate, the PNP laid out effective operational plans that have a bearing on the community's prevailing problems, specifically criminality, which disturbed the area's peace and order. The operational plan was drawn directly from the agency and program strategic



plans embodying vision, mission, and goals that are basic to attaining its objectives. The operational plan must also contain its specification and clear-cut structuring as to its present situation, the agency's plan to go, and the strategy of attaining its vision and the adopted measure. Along with the vision, mission, and objectives, the Philippine National Police (PNP) function is to serve and protect people's lives and property by preventing the commission of crimes.

The police's crime prevention efforts have led to the development of new strategies and activities to deter criminals from committing crimes. Moreover, as police work on determining the factors linked with the types of crimes and tried to change the factors associated with it, it can lead to innovative ways to prevent or reduce crimes (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2010).

Several studies on police activities, policing, and crime emerges (eg., Braga et al., 2012; Braga et al., 2015; Ceccato, 2019; Crawl, 2017; Peters & Cohen, 2017) the fundamental tenet of preventing its commission remains a critical issue. It was believed that these activities are aimed at preventing an individual from engaging in illegal activities. Preventing crime commission is vital as it lowers criminality and deters future occurrence, and is cheap (Chalfin & McCrary, 2017). Police operational activities have shown their influence in reducing and displacing crimes (Johnson et al., 2014; Patalinghug, 2017; Sohn, 2016; Tondo et al., 2020) and avert potential harm (Crawford & Evans, 2017).

Collaborations between the private and public sectors are frequently touted as they provide a synergistic effect in preventing crimes. This includes partnerships between public police and private security (Prenzler & Sarre, 2012).

In this context, we need to reflect and understand that crime prevention activities are localized in nature. The increase in police activity leads to lower committed crimes (Ater et al., 2014).

It has been said that the effectiveness of a police organization is measured through the absence of crime and the police operational output in solving crime, apprehension, and prosecution of criminals with the guarantee that

constitutional rights are strictly observed (Verschelde & Rogge, 2012). The context in which the operations take place needs to be understood before considering individual police operations and the expertise needed to execute them efficiently and effectively.

Section 13 of the Republic Act 8551 (Philippine National Police (PNP), also known as the Reform and Reorganization Act of 1998) provides the authority for restructuring the PNP. In particular, on the assignment, technical, clerical, or menial and other and appointment of non-uniformed personnel to the position that are purely administrative positions that are not actually and directly related to police operations deploying police personnel from headquarters to field offices to increase police visibility as a deterrent factor to reduce criminality.

As the government and its prevention mandate crime and its resolution is the fundamental responsibility lie on the police, enforcement of laws through patrol, traffic management, and criminal investigation motivates ingredients to achieve peace and order. Hence, the progress of the community was logically linked to peace and order. Society is considered political, social, economic and culturally weakened without peace and order. Furthermore, the police being considered the prime mover of the criminal justice process must comply with utmost dedication and commitment for a peaceful and harmonious society worthy of emulation. For this reason, the researchers were prompted to conduct the study to determine the extent of the police operation at Pagadian City Police Station and its relationship to the existing crime in the area.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study was conducted to 1) present the profile of the respondents and the crime rate in Pagadian City; 2) present the crime committed in Pagadian City in terms of the index and non-index crimes; 3) determine the extent of police operation activities in Pagadian City, and 4) test the relationship between the rate of crime committed and the extent of police operation activities in Pagadian City.



## METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a quantitative descriptive method of research. A thorough investigation and interpretation of the PNP members' police operation activities at Pagadian Police Station were considered in this study.

The respondents were 142 Philippine National Police Officers assigned in Pagadian City Police Station, province of Zamboanga del Sur. The respondents' total number was distributed to the three (3) main sections of the researcher's PNP organization as variables of this investigation: patrolling, traffic management, and investigation with a margin of 5% error in the table below. There were 51 respondents from the patrol operation section, 40 from the investigation section, and 51 from traffic management.

The questionnaire utilized in this study was self-made, which underwent thorough validation and reliability testing processes in finding out the extent of police operation activities in patrolling, traffic management, and investigation and getting the respondents' profile. The questionnaire contains two parts: the first part dealt with the police officers' profile. The second part dealt with the extent of police operation activities of PNP members in Pagadian City Police Station on profile existed in Pagadian City as recorded in their station was also utilized and considered. The questionnaire on the police operation activities concerning crime profile on the three (3) identified variables of the study consisted of thirty (30) items, and each variable has ten (10) questions.

Criminal justice and criminology experts critically scrutinized the content of the questionnaire examining its appropriateness and validity. Revision of the instruments was done based on the suggestions and comments given.

In determining the questionnaire's reliability, pilot testing was done among 30 police officers from the neighboring towns that were not included in this investigation. The instrument was also referred to the statistician for his final recommendation regarding the contents of the instrument. In measuring the instrument's internal validity and reliability, Cronbach's Alpha was used, employing the Statistical Package for the

Social Sciences (SPSS Statistics version 22.0). The pilot testing result is above the alpha having a threshold or cut-off of acceptable of  $>0.70$  in Griethuijsen et al. (2014).

Before the data gathering, the researchers first secured approval from the Jose Rizal Memorial State University Dapitan City and the City Director of the PNP to conduct the study. In data gathering, the researchers made sure that the ethical considerations were appropriately followed.

After the approval was sought, the researchers administered the questionnaire to the PNP members in Pagadian City Police Station and were retrieved right after.

In drawing out the respondents' responses on the extent of police operation activities, the five-point Likert scale was employed.

The data gathered from the responses were presented through the table as the basis for analysis, presentation, and interpretation. The different statistical measures are as follows: 1) Frequency count and percentage for the respondents' profile; 2) Ranking and weighted mean in determining the extent of police operation activities in Pagadian City, and 3) The  $t$ -test was used in determining the significant difference between the responses of police officers assigned in different sections along with the variables.

For objectivity in analyzing the research problem, the researchers tested the hypothesis at a five percent significance level. If the computed  $t$ -test is  $\geq 0.05$  level significance associated with six degrees of freedom, the formulated null hypothesis is rejected. Likewise, if the computed value is  $< 0.05$ , the null hypothesis will be accepted.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 presents the respondents' demographics in terms of gender, educational attainment, number of hours of seminars and training, and years in service. The data on gender showed that there were 95 or 86.36% males respondents while only 15 or 13.64% were



females. This means to say that males very well dominate the police force.

**Table 1**  
*Demographic Profile of the Respondents*

Demographics Categories	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	95	86.36
Female	15	13.64
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Educational Attainment</b>		
College Graduate	88	80.00
BS with MA units	19	17.27
MA full-fledged	3	2.73
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Number of Hours of Seminars and Training</b>		
20 hours below	3	2.73
21–30 hours	14	12.76
31–40 hours	29	26.36
41–50 hours	31	28.18
Above 50 hours	33	30.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Years in the Service</b>		
5 years and below	28	25.45
6– 10 years	32	29.09
11–15 years	22	20.00
16–20 years	11	10.00
Above 20 years	17	15.45
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The respondents’ profile in terms of educational attainment shows that there was 88 or 80.00 percent who were bachelor’s degree holders; 19 or 17.27 percent were earning units in their master’s degree, and only 3 or 2.73 percent have fully earned their master’s degree.

As seen in Table 1, more police officers attended training for more than 50 hours. They

constituted 30.00 percent of the total number of respondents. Further, there was 31 or 28.18 percent of the respondents who attended training for 41-50 hours; 29 respondents or 26.36 percent have been additionally training for 31-40 hours; 14 or 12.76 percent have been attending training and seminars for 21-30 hours, and the remaining 3 or 2.73 percent have attended training for 20 hours and below.

On the respondents’ profile in terms of number of years in service, the data show that there were 28 respondents or 25.45 percent who were in the service for 5 years and below; 32 or 29.09 percent have been employed for 6-10 years; 22 or 20.00 percent have been serving the police force for 11-15 years; 11 or 10 percent have been in the police service for 16-20 years and the remaining 17 or 15.45 percent were in the service for more than 20 years.

**2. Crimes committed in Pagadian City in terms of the index and non-index crimes**

**Table 2**  
*Crimes committed in Pagadian City in terms of index and non-index crimes*

Crimes Categories	Frequency	Percent
<b>Index Crimes</b>		
Crimes Against Person	270	52.43
Crimes Against Property	245	47.57
<b>Total</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Non-Index Crimes</b>		
Violation of Special Laws	62	27.31
Other Non-Index Crimes	165	72.69
<b>Total</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 2 presents the data on the index and non-index crimes in Pagadian City. The data show that there were 270 crimes against persons and 245 crimes against property. This shows that there were more crimes against the person as compared to crimes against property. These crimes include physical injury, murder, rape, and homicide. In criminal law, the offense against a person is typically a crime committed through



actual physical harm or coercion. Crimes against the person can occur anywhere. Crimes against the person are a criminal offense, and thus, even if the aggrieved party may opt not to file a case, the case may be filed by the people. However, most of the crimes can be settled without being brought to court.

In non-index crimes, it could be seen that violation of special laws only constitutes 27.31 percent of the total non-index crimes while other non-index crimes constitute a bulk of 72.69 percent. More crimes about car thefts and kidnapping are classified as non-index of money, to be paid to a person as compensation for loss or injury.

For instance, damages that are usually a prize for money payable to an individual for loss or injury are examples of infringement. In the case of a breach of a claimant contract, a court usually grants the money that the injured party will return to a loss as to the financial condition that they expected from the fulfillment of the promise or commitments. The rules of the claims can and always differ depending on the form of claim that is made (eg, breach of contract versus a claim) (known as an “expectation measure” or “benefit-of-the-bargain” measure of damages). Where it is not or not desirous of granting the claimant damage can be granted by the court for the purpose of re-establishing the economic position of the injured party at the time the contract was entered into (known as “reliance measure”) or to prevent the violator from being wrongly improved (“restitution”) by the party. Under common law, a liquidated damages clause is not enforced if the purpose of the term is solely to punish a breach (in this case, it is termed punitive damages). The clause is enforceable if it involves a genuine attempt to quantify a loss in advance and is in good faith estimate of economic loss. Courts have ruled as excessive and invalidated damages that the parties contracted as liquidated, but the court found to be penal. A liquidated damages clause is not extended according to the common law when the term's object is only to punish a violation (in this case, it is termed penal damages). The clause will be applied if a sincere effort to measure the loss in advance is necessary and economic loss is measured in good faith. The courts have ruled

that the damage contracted by the parties is unreasonable and invalidated but considered to be punitive.

### 3. Extent of Police Operation in Pagadian City

#### 3.1. Patrolling Activities

Table 3 presents the data on the extent of police operation activities in terms of patrolling.

**Table 3**  
*Extent of Police Operation Activities in Terms of Patrolling*

Items	AVW	D
1. Patrolling assigned beats, observing, and checking suspicious people and vehicles	4.11	MO
2. Responding to calls, entertaining complaints, initiating the investigation and protection of the scene	4.05	MO
3. Preventing disorders and dispersing unlawful assemblies	3.79	MO
4. Preventing crimes and arresting wrongdoers sighted	3.94	MO
5. Inspecting various places of business establishment and other installation and removal of hazards of public safety	3.87	MO
6. Assisting traffic personnel	3.67	MO
7. Conducting home visitation, ugnayan with the community	3.38	O
8. Reporting occurrences and conditions which relates to crime, public peace and order and public safety	3.93	MO
9. Enforcing city ordinances on liquor establishment and night clubs and all houses of ill-refutes	3.85	MO
10. Checking suspicious vehicles of all kinds along the highway in the course of patrolling	4.13	MO
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.87</b>	<b>MO</b>

The data on the table shows that patrolling was much observable in the study. The average weighted values of all items and the mean of 3.87 were described as much observable. This means that police officers conduct patrol operations in different places within the vicinity of their responsibility, enforcing ordinances, checking



suspicious vehicles, assisting in traffic personnel, and other forms of patrolling.

This implies that the policemen are doing their job. Police Patrolling includes patrol officials, through their high visibility, observations, car, pedestrian inspections, and physical protection of entry to these sites, to identify, discourage and prevent personal assaults, loss of properties, and illegal activity and acts of terrorism. Officers ensure that the required authorization identity exists for individuals entering specified areas, and stationary electronic protections are also operational. Officers operate on foot and in designated emergency vehicles for buildings and areas. There are traffic citations and felony arrests. Hazardous conditions such as roads, walkways, lighting, traffic control devices, and signage defects are detected, and corrections initiated.

### 3.2. Traffic Management

**Table 4**  
*Police Operation Activities in Terms of Traffic Management*

Items	AVW	D
1. Traffic management plan or ordinance formulation	3.60	MO
2. Traffic management plan or ordinance implementation	3.53	MO
3. Information and education of motor vehicle operators, drivers and commuters	3.49	MO
4. Enough number of traffic officers	3.24	O
5. Knowledge and training of traffic officers	3.44	MO
6. Proper posting of signages of one-way, no parking, no u-turn and others	3.30	O
7. Well-designed pedestrian lanes	3.19	O
8. Well-installed CCTV camera along the streets with heavy traffic	2.14	O
9. Well-designed traffic lights	2.07	O
10. Fair and square treatment of traffic violators	3.16	O
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.12</b>	<b>O</b>

Table 4 depicts the data on the extent of police operation activities in terms of traffic management. As seen on the table, traffic management formulation and implementation, as well as information dissemination of traffic officers, were much observable with average weighted values of 3.60, 3.53, 3.49, and 3.44, respectively.

This means that along this line, traffic management has been well enhanced and facilitated. On the other hand, there were also observable traffic management practices to include the number of traffic officers, CCTV camera installation in conspicuous places, traffic light design, etc. Traffic management as an operational activity obtained a mean of 3.12. This means observed that police officers are doing their best to perform their jobs. Traffic management is both an indoor and outdoor activity, night or day for long hours in all weathers, and is considered dangerous due to the high risk of passing vehicles.

### 3.3. Investigation

**Table 5**  
*Extent of Police Operation Activities in Terms of Investigation*

Items	AVW	D
1. Well-trained and knowledgeable members of the investigation team	3.68	MO
2. Enough number of investigators	3.60	MO
3. Funds intended for investigative matter is well provided	3.65	MO
4. Thorough surveillance is made prior to arresting the accused	3.92	MO
5. Miranda warning is always invoked during the arrest of the accused	4.08	MO
6. Unnecessary force is well-observed during the arrest and detention of the accused	3.67	MO
7. The presence of a lawyer is given in all stages of custodial investigation	3.78	MO
8. Collaborative evidence of the case at hand are properly investigated	3.70	MO
9. Coordination of the linking components of the criminal justice system is well-done	3.80	MO
10. Handling of the accused and evidence are well-observed	3.82	MO
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.77</b>	<b>MO</b>



Table 5 presents the data on the police operation activities in terms of the investigation. The table's data show average weighted values that fell within the range 3.41-4.20, all described as much observable. It could be noticed that investigation is evident and observable in the locale of this study. The mean of 3.77 proves the claim. This could mean that police investigation has to the people because the police officers do it. A police investigation usually involves a uniformed officer who attends the scene of a crime initially. Nevertheless, in cases where the crime is serious or sensitive, an officer may be appointed to investigate. Police officers have also been specialized extensively in dealing with particular crimes such as sexual crime, hate, and domestic violence.

This implies that members of the PNP in these stations are serious with their work and are therefore very professional in dealing with critical situations, especially in the Pagadian City Police Station. This finding explained that a given group's satisfaction comes from the law enforcer's routine bravery and imaginative patience to locate the suspect and apprehend him, bring him to trial, and render a conviction beyond a reasonable doubt. Every police institution cannot serve and protect the people unless it has a well-managed crime investigation organization.

#### 4. Significant relationship between the level of police operation and the rate of crime commission Pagadian City

##### 4.1. Regression Analysis on the Predictors of Index Crimes in Pagadian City

**Table 6**  
*Regression Analysis on the Predictors of Index Crimes in Pagadian City*

$$\text{Index Crimes} = 2.65 + 0.0763\text{Patrolling} + 0.0544 \text{Traffic Management} - 0.0555 \text{Investigation}$$

Predictor	CoefSE	Coef	T	P
Constant	2.6490	0.4902	5.40	0.000
Patrolling	0.07631	0.09598	0.80	0.428
Traffic	0.05442	0.09546	0.57	0.570
Investigation	-0.05547	0.09580	-0.58	0.564

Table 6 shows the predictors and preventers of the index crime profile in Pagadian City. The table shows that patrolling has the highest factor loading among all other factors. This has a coefficient of 0.763 compared to traffic management, which has only a factor load of 0.544, while the investigation obtained a negative factor of -0.0554.

This means that constant patrolling would lessen the index crime rate in the area. Further, this implies that index crimes can be prevented when the police officers are evident in the locality. With the police's presence, the criminals are hesitant to commit crimes because of fear of apprehension or being caught.

##### 4.2. Regression Analysis on the Non-Index Crimes in Pagadian City

**Table 7**  
*Regression Analysis on the Non-Index Crimes in Pagadian City*

$$\text{Non-Index Crimes} = 1.62 + 0.0437 \text{Patrolling} + 0.0049 \text{Traffic Management} - 0.0149 \text{Investigation}$$

Predictor	CoefSE	Coef	T	P
Constant	1.6178	0.1765	9.17	0.000
Patrolling	0.04373	0.03456	-1.27	0.209
Traffic	0.00494	0.03437	0.14	0.886
Investigation	-0.01488	0.03450	-0.43	0.667

Table 7 shows the regression analysis on the police operation to non-index crime profile in Pagadian City. The table shows that, just like the preceding table, patrolling obtained the highest factor load of 0.04373. It is followed by traffic management with a load of 0.0049, while the investigation obtained a factor load of -0.01488. This means that patrolling is still the main cause why crime rates decreased. The presence or absence of the police officers in the vicinity would tell the number of crimes that could happen. With police visibility, the criminals or offenders are prevented from committing a crime. Thus, there is a need to mobilize the police officers if the crime rate is aimed to be lowered.



## CONCLUSIONS

The following findings are found in this study, to wit:

1. More respondents were 31-35 years old and above, mostly male. A good number of them were bachelor's degree holders in educational attainment and mostly attended training and seminars for more than 50 hours. Further, the respondents have already served 15 years or below in the police service.
2. On police operational activities, patrolling and investigation were found to be much observable. While the traffic management activities were observable.
3. Police officers are doing their job well, particularly in patrol operation and investigation. This study shows the influence of police activities in deterring the commission of both index and non-index crime. Traffic Management was found to be observable and needs to be given special attention as one of the PNP organization's primary functions.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study and conclusions, the following recommendations are now offered:

1. Police officers must conduct intensive patrolling specifically in a crime-prone geographical area or within their areas of responsibility through designing strategies to eliminate crime opportunity such as proper beat distribution for patrol officers, maximize personnel deployment on the field and focus more on foot patrolling on areas cited as hot-spot for criminal presence and activity.
2. Police officers should strengthen their practices, especially along the area of traffic management as it is along this line where there are lower ratings compared to other police functions through requesting the local

government officials for the procurement of traffic lights, improvement of traffic signs and intensive implementation of traffic laws and regulations by apprehending traffic violator without fear or favor, and the installation of CCTV camera along areas of heavy traffic and congestions to monitor the flow of traffic violation and other traffic-related incidents.

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## AUTHORS' PROFILE

**John Dexter G. Sarcena** is a licensed professional teacher, Criminologist, and full-time faculty member of J.H Cerilles State College-Dumingag Campus. He was the former Dean of the Pagadian Capitol College in which two (2) of his students landed as placers for rank nos. 1 and 3 in the licensure examination for Criminology in the years 2014 and 2018. His dedication and commitment to teaching inspires him to finish and earned his Master's and Doctorate in Criminal Justice major in Criminology at Jose Rizal Memorial State University, Dapitan City, and at the University of Cebu, Cebu City respectively. At present, he is an active member of the Professional Criminologist Association of the





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