

The Relevance of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) Program on the Civic and Naval Competencies

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Abstract

This study analyzed the relevance of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) program on the civic and naval competencies of maritime and naval graduates in the Philippines. Grounded in Kirkpatrick's Model of Training Evaluation, the research examined how post-graduation career paths—specifically Active Duty within the Philippine Navy, Naval Reservist tracks, and Maritime Professionals working as Merchant Marines—shape self-perceived capabilities across key operational and civic dimensions. Using a quantitative-descriptive research design, empirical data were gathered from a stratified random sample of 231 graduates out of an institutional population of 573 individuals from the Philippine Merchant Marine Academy (PMMA), the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP), and the Naval Officers Schools Center (NOSC) Class of 2022. A structured self-assessment questionnaire utilizing a 4-point Likert scale was administered to capture multi-dimensional competency profiles, which were treated statistically using weighted means, sample standard deviations, and One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) via IBM SPSS software. The descriptive findings revealed a critical dichotomy within the respondents' civic competencies. The cohort exhibited exemplary alignment and behavioral standards in institutional ethics and integrity (Overall Mean = 3.63), disaster risk reduction and management readiness (Overall Mean = 3.17), and nationalism and patriotism (Overall Mean = 3.01). However, severe structural deficiencies were exposed in practical community fieldwork; respondents scored critically low in drafting community needs analyses (Mean = 1.68) and conducting basic community assessments (Mean = 1.69). In contrast, the cohort demonstrated exceptional, well-rounded operational mastery "To a Very High Extent" across all assessed naval parameters, led by technical proficiency (Overall Mean = 3.62), tactical discipline (Overall Mean = 3.61), command and control protocols (Overall Mean = 3.59), navigation and seamanship (Overall Mean = 3.53), and quality training tool integration (Overall Mean = 3.51). Inferential analysis confirmed that professional status and occupational placement fundamentally differentiate self-assessed readiness. One-Way ANOVA tests consistently rejected the primary null hypotheses ($p < .001$) across all dimensions, indicating that rank and career trajectories heavily skew individual capabilities. The most pronounced variations were recorded in the domains of social responsibility ($F=143.279$) and tactical discipline ($F=64.818$). Based on these insights, the study concludes that distinct career tracks cultivate disparate levels of operational confidence and expertise. It strongly recommends shifting maritime instruction away from a rigid compliance model toward an agile, role-stratified, competency-based training framework. Actionable strategies include integrating grassroots project-development modules to bridge administrative civic gaps, establishing cross-functional professional exchange workshops, introducing track-specific modules such as commercial-defense interoperability for merchant marines, and leveraging advanced technological simulation tools and field exercises to directly secure long-term national defense preparedness and archipelagic resilience.

Keywords: ROTC (Reserve Officers' Training Corps), Kirkpatrick's Model of Training Evaluation, Civic Competencies, Naval Competencies, Maritime Professionals/Merchant Marines, Philippine Navy/ Naval Reservists, Competency-Based Training, National Defense Preparedness

