

Effectiveness of Police Visibility Strategies as Crime Prevention Initiatives Against Criminality in the Municipality of San Manuel Isabela

Michael Pajuelas Viernes*

MS Criminology Student, Graduate School, University of La Salette Inc., Santiago City, Philippines

Abstract: This study was conducted to assess the effectiveness of police visibility strategies as crime prevention initiatives against criminality in the municipality of San Manuel, Isabela. A quantitative survey method was employed with 50 PNP personnel and 363 randomly selected barangay residents as participants in this study. The study revealed that most of the Philippine National Police personnel are 31-35 years old, male, married, Police Master Sergeants, and in service for 6-10 years. Meanwhile, most barangay residents are 21-25 years old, male, married, college graduates, belong to families with 1-3 members, farmers, with an average monthly income of Php5,000.00–Php9,999.00. Furthermore, the different police visibility strategies in crime prevention are perceived by PNP personnel as very effective while barangay residents claim that they are effective. Hence, there is a difference in the perceptions of police personnel and residents on the effectiveness of police visibility strategies in crime prevention. Moreover, there is a seriousness of the problems encountered in the implementation of police visibility strategies in San Manuel, Isabela. Finally, there is a strong agreement on the different interventions to enhance police visibility in the municipality.

Keywords: community policing, public safety, crime prevention, police visibility strategies, police interventions, implementation.

1. Introduction

Changes that have been taking place in policing over the past years have led to new policing concepts, such as community policing or problem-oriented policing, efforts to find more effective ways of policing, which will promote public safety and enhance citizens' quality of life, that will, increase the feeling of safety and reduce the fear of crime. The scope and nature of crime, as well as changes in the type of crime, led the police to find more effective solutions and to expand crime control tactics with crime prevention strategies, increasing the feeling of safety and the quality of life in communities. Therefore, lack of feeling of safety, that is, fear of crime has turned into a significant problem and has gradually become the focus of police interest. Due to the function that the police have in society, it is considered that their presence and visibility can successfully reduce such fear in local communities by improving citizens' overall sense of safety.

A. Background of the Study

The integrity of the Philippine National Police has been

greatly dented by the unlawful acts of a few. To regain the public trust and confidence in this law enforcement agency, there is therefore a need for strengthening and making the police visibility more evident in every area as a means of preventing crimes and maintaining law, peace, and order. The omnipresence of law enforcers in their respective areas of responsibility can and do have a substantial impact on the crime prevention strategy of the Philippine National Police. Police visibility creates a feeling of security on the part of the law-abiding citizen, a feeling of confidence that the policemen are available to respond when called upon in any situation, and a feeling of fear on the part of the would-be violators.

One of the plausible reasons why circumstances that revolve around crimes go from bad to the worst possible scenario is the lack of police visibility. Offenders are confident in going the extra mile to accomplish the crime because the possibility of being caught in the area is close to zero. The lack of police visibility could also cause the delay in reporting crimes causing the failure of apprehension of offenders. Unfortunately, the system of the local police is not to blame for this problem.

Republic Act No. 6975, titled, "An Act Establishing the Philippine National Police Under a Reorganized Department of the Interior and Local Government, and for Other Purposes", under Section 27 provides that, "on the average nationwide, the manning levels of the PNP shall be approximately in accordance with a police-to-population ratio of one (1) policeman for every five hundred (500) persons" (Chan Roble Virtual Law Library, 1990). However, in San Manuel, Isabela alone, a policeman in a given area has 620 people under his care which is more than the given standard (San Manuel PS Data, 2023).

With an area comprising 12,317 hectares (43.54 sq. mi.) which is divided into nineteen (19) barangays, and housing of more than 35,332 individuals (LGU San Manuel Data, 2023), with only fifty-seven (57) policemen to watch over them, giving a PNP San Manuel to Population ratio of 1:620 (San Manuel PS Data, 2023), which is higher than the standard ratio of 1:500 under Section 27 of Republic Act No. 6975. With this, crime may sprout anywhere in the municipality. Logically speaking, a person in his right mind would be discouraged from

*Corresponding author: fridaymike01@gmail.com

knowingly committing a crime while authorities are visibly present. With the lack of personnel, police visibility in all areas; reducing attempts of committing a crime is quite impossible.

These are the instances where the general public loses their confidence in the police. Their fear of being a victim of a crime could greatly affect their lifestyles. The loss of confidence could also lead to their dissatisfaction considering that they have to partially sacrifice their resources and freedom for the government so that the government could provide security.

In response to this, in the Municipality of San Manuel, Isabela, the local police strategize police visibility for crime prevention. The strategies include the following: Intensified conduct of IPOSTE (Police Outpost in the Street for Traffic direction, control, and Emergencies), Mobile/motorcycle patrol, Foot/beat patrol, Oplan Night Rider, Adoption of Project E-SCUBA (Enhanced Search Inside Canals and Underground Against Bank Attacks), and Revitalized Police sa Barangay (RPSB).

The Project IPOSTE was established to intensify traffic law enforcement, apprehend violators, deter lawless elements, and ensure peace and public safety within the Municipality of San Manuel, Isabela. Meanwhile, regular mobile/motorcycle patrol activity is initiated to maximize police visibility during rush hours. Foot/beat patrol, on the other hand, increases police visibility in busy areas, enhances citizens' feeling of safety, and builds bridges between citizens and police. Foot patrol officers are expected to visit businesses along their beat and to interact with citizens. They also respond to calls for service within their area.

Meanwhile, Oplan Night Rider is conducted using mobile patrol with blinkers on, in places of convergence, in the market, business establishments, banks, and financial institutions within the area of responsibility to prevent any occurrence of all forms of criminality. Moreover, Project E-SCUBA (Enhanced Search Inside Canals and Underground Against Bank Attacks) was also adopted as a preventive measure against robbery and other similar crimes. This activity aims to inspect the security parameters and the installed alarm and Close Circuit Television (CCTV) for security purposes and to preempt occurrences of crimes within the municipality.

Furthermore, Police sa Barangay (RPSB) was likewise revitalized. The Revitalized-Pulis sa Barangay Program (R-PSB) stands as a cornerstone in the Philippine National Police's (PNP) strategy for sustaining the gains in the total defeat of the insurgency. This initiative focuses on community engagement, fostering a proactive relationship between law enforcement and local residents.

By intensifying police visibility and involvement at the grassroots level, the program aims to build trust, gather vital intelligence, and address issues promptly. Through collaborative efforts, the PNP seeks to create a resilient bond with communities, discouraging insurgent activities and promoting a sense of security. This approach aligns with the broader goal of achieving lasting peace and stability.

It is within this context that this study was undertaken to focus on the effects of police visibility strategies as crime reduction measures and the challenges encountered in the

implementation of these strategies. Police visibility is a means of facilitating a much more accessible engagement and intervention of the police which could enhance quality of life in general by reducing fear and incidences of crimes. It aims to provide authorities with innovation in maintaining constant police visibility. Hence, the success of this study could significantly decrease crime rates in the municipality of San Manuel, Isabela.

B. Research Questions

1. How effective are the police visibility strategies in crime prevention as perceived by police personnel and the residents of the municipality?
2. Is there a significant difference in the perceptions of police personnel and residents on the effectiveness of police visibility strategies in crime prevention?
3. What are the problems encountered in the implementation of police visibility strategies?

C. Research Hypothesis

There is no difference in the perceptions of police personnel and residents on the effectiveness of police visibility strategies in crime prevention

D. Significance of the Study

The Result of this Study Will Be Beneficial to the Following:

San Manuel Police Station. The results of this study may be utilized by the organization to enhance its performance by improving the implementation of police visibility activities/programs in the municipality.

Police Personnel. As agents in the provision of basic peace and order services to the residents of the municipality, the PNP personnel will benefit from the results of this study by using the data as a reference in employing modifications and adjustments were deemed necessary to further improve their performance in the implementation of the different police visibility activities/programs.

Barangay Residents. As a vital part of society, the result of this study may be used as a reference in providing support to the PNP in curbing the occurrence of crimes in their respective barangays.

Community. The result of this study may be used to enhance the implementation of police visibility strategies in crime reduction; thus, achieving a more peaceful society, which in turn, will result in a more progressive community.

Future Researchers. The results of this study may serve as a springboard for them to pursue an investigation parallel to this study. This study may reveal insights that will help future researchers realize the goals of their studies. They may use the data of this study to come up with a bigger and wider spectrum of the subject.

E. Conceptual Framework

The present study was anchored on the basic system framework of Input-Process-Output (IPO). The input frame involves the perceptions of police personnel and barangay residents on the effectiveness of police visibility strategies in crime prevention and the problems encountered in the

implementation of police visibility strategies. The process frame involves assessment through a survey of the effectiveness of police visibility strategies in crime prevention and the problems encountered in the implementation of police visibility strategies in crime prevention. The output frame is the recommendations to improve the police visibility strategy in the municipality of San Manuel, Isabela, for Crime Prevention. To have a clearer understanding of the conceptual framework of this study, a paradigm is presented below.

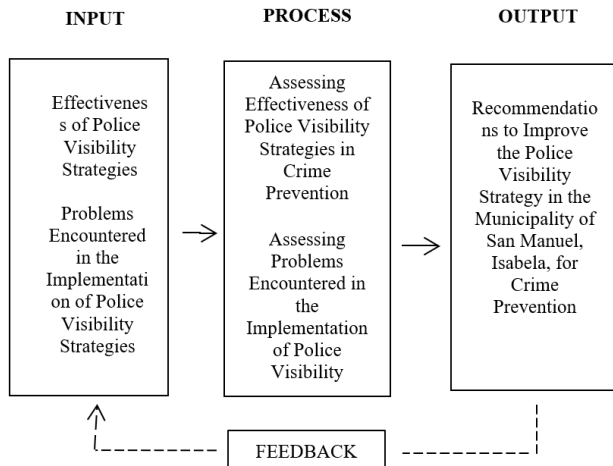


Fig. 1. Paradigm of the study

F. Literature Review

Police visibility as an aspect of community engagement in policing policy is structured around several implicit assumptions about the role of citizens, the functioning of a police presence, and the community as the site for policing. It is embedded in descriptions of the police delivering a service responsive to the community which in turn implies that citizens will engage with police officers and staff on patrol; that a police presence will provide an engagement function, and that communities will be identifiable units discernible to police officers and staff on patrol (Weston, 2020).

Kappeler et al (2020) contend that community policing is a philosophy rather than an academic activity. It outlines those criminal activities that occur due to the community's social challenges, which can be solved through public cooperation and support. Community policing as a philosophy demands specific policing styles and a different policing approach, provides enhanced policing accountability and transparency due to communities being aware of police strategies for the effective use of available resources, and builds a good working relationship and trust between the police and public.

A systematic review by Braga et al (2019) concluded that overall, hot spot policing can be effective at reducing crime. Indeed, 62 out of 78 studies included in the review reported that crime fell in the locations targeted for police presence and activity relative to other locations that were not targeted. One study found that property crime fell by 31% in hot spots patrolled by marked police cars compared to hot spots where business as usual was maintained (Ratcliffe et al, 2020). Property crime did not fall in hot spots patrolled by unmarked

police cars, highlighting the importance of the police providing a visible deterrence. Importantly, systematic reviews have shown that crime displacement tends not to happen with focused police activity in high-crime places. The crime reduction benefits may even spread to the areas immediately surrounding the targeted locations (Braga, et al, 2019).

In the United Kingdom, Yesberg, Brunton-Smith, and Bradford (2021) ventured into a study to explore the impact of police visibility and community engagement on collective efficacy. Using three waves of survey data collected from London residents over three consecutive years, and multilevel Structural Equation Modelling, this study tested the impact of police visibility and police-community engagement on collective efficacy. They explored direct effects as well as indirect effects through trust in police. The findings showed levels of police visibility predicted trust in police. Trust in police fairness, in turn, predicted collective efficacy. There was a small indirect relationship between police visibility and collective efficacy, through trust in police fairness. In other words, police presence in neighborhoods was associated with more positive views about officer behavior, which in turn was associated with collective efficacy. The findings have important implications for policies designed to build stronger, more resilient communities.

Dau et al (2021) conducted a systematic review to assess the efficacy of quantitative police presence. They found evidence that police presence has mostly positive effects on reducing crimes related to motor theft, property, violence, and guns. Police presence also reduces calls for service and improves traffic behavior. Police presence focused on specific areas, times, and types of crime achieves maximum efficacy. The reviewed studies show a high degree of heterogeneity in reporting, which limits the comparability of findings across studies. Research on police presence presents evidence for crime-preventative effects of focused police actions. Police forces can be focused on certain areas, times, and types of crimes. They encourage future research to focus on police presence en route and its effects, including crime prevention, traffic regulation, and fear of crime.

In Kenya, Mwaeke (2019) assessed public perceptions of the effectiveness of policing and the social costs of crime in Nairobi policing region. The research adopted a cross sectional study design. It targeted both middle- and low-income residential areas of Nairobi policing region in jurisdictions of two police divisions, namely; Buruburu and Kajiado. Stratified random sampling design was used to select a sample that comprised 384 informants. The household was the main unit of analysis because the brunt of the social costs of crime is first felt at family level. The study also included police officers, victims who were living in pain and community policing committee members. Questionnaire, Pain Assessment Scale and Focused Group Discussion guides were the main tools of data collection. The study tested four hypotheses using Chi-Square as the test statistic. The study concluded that ineffectiveness of policing was also costly to the police service itself. According to the study, there were perceptions that increase of police effectiveness would automatically reduce that of the social

costs of crime.

In Croatia, Borovec, Balgač, and Mraović (2019) conducted a study to determine the connection between various aspects of police visibility, being predictor variables, with a sense of safety. The data for this research were collected from a sample containing 1,096 respondents, which can be considered representative of the Republic of Croatia based on socio-demographic characteristics. Besides seven socio-demographic variables, the questionnaire used in the research contained 34 variables found in the following sub-scales: perception of crime victimization risk and frequency; perception of feeling of safety and assessment of self-protection ability; perception of incivilities that disrupt the public order; perception of the presence of problematic categories of persons; perception of police visibility. The data were processed by using multivariate regression and multivariate quasi-canonical analyses. The research results point to a statistically significant, yet relatively weak connection between the components of police visibility and the sense of safety. On the other hand, police foot patrols and dealings towards persons disrupting public order in the neighborhood have a positive effect on citizens' feeling of safety; however, police car patrols have an opposite effect.

Meanwhile, in South Africa, Mangai et al (2022) analyzed the importance of police-community partnerships aka co-production in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality (Johannesburg) to fight crime. A police-community partnership is a form of community policing used to fight crime to ensure a safe living and working environment for the public. It closes the gap between the police and the community by establishing a working relationship and deep engagement between the two. Therefore, communities share responsibilities with the police, such as street patrolling and guarding private and public properties. This study found that the strengthening of police-community partnership is an effective way to reduce crime, as it enables the community to be watchdogs for the police and report any suspicious activities happening. A qualitative research approach was used, and data were gathered through key informant interviews conducted at nine different police stations around Johannesburg. The study found that police-community partnership is essential in curbing crime; however, its success in Johannesburg was affected by a lack of resources and insufficient support from the government. The study recommended that the South African government should support the police services with the required resources and amend legislation protecting criminals.

Furthermore, Kochel and Gau (2019) ventured into a study and used a panel community survey from the United States, with three waves of data collection, to test the impact of perceptions of police visibility, police-community engagement and satisfaction with police tactics on perceptions of informal social control and social cohesion. They found that satisfaction with police visibility, satisfaction with police tactics, and police-community engagement (at wave 1) were significant predictors of social cohesion (at wave 2), and, through social cohesion, these policing measures indirectly predicted informal social control (wave 3). There were no significant direct effects of the policing measures on informal social control, and

perceptions of police visibility (as opposed to satisfaction with visibility) was not a significant predictor of social cohesion or informal social control.

In another study, Kochel (2018) used three waves of resident surveys in Trinidad and Tobago to explore how legitimacy and police competence influence collective efficacy and violent victimization. Police legitimacy did not produce greater collective efficacy (or vice versa), but there was a direct positive relationship between police competence (a measure including effectiveness, procedural justice, and trust) and collective efficacy. Kochel (2018) concluded that the way police are perceived to act is more important for neighborhood social processes than people's general impressions of the policing institution. In other words, how people perceive the actions of police officers and organizations may be more enabling of their engagement in informal social control than any sense of duty toward police generated by legitimacy. This idea fits with the overall findings from the REA, which showed police legitimacy had only a weak relationship with collective efficacy.

In the Philippines, Valenzuela and Tamayo (2021) identified the effects of police visibility and the problems encountered on its implementation based on the perspective of the citizens of Lipa. Descriptive type of research method was utilized in the study with 357 randomly selected participants from different barangay household in Lipa City, Batangas. Results showed that crime reduction as one of the major purposes of police visibility is viewed with higher effect than police public relations. The respondents believed that there are possible problems encountered on its implementation which include: having alleged inefficient officers, lack of personnel, not updated equipment, unhealthy officers, and lack of budget. The groups of respondents from age brackets 26-35 and 36-45 have significantly higher problems observed in the constant police visibility compared to groups with age brackets 18-25 and 56-above. Meanwhile, sex has nothing to do with their perception on the effects and problems encountered. Likewise, there are respondents from specific barangays that have significantly higher response on the effects of police visibility where they find it very essential in their area. Furthermore, those surveyed barangay residents with higher response regarding the effects of police-public relations are also those respondents with higher perceived problems. An action plan was proposed to enhance the police visibility in the densely populated areas and barangays in the City of Lipa as law enforcement strategy to fight against crime and maintain the peace and order of the barangays.

Still in the Philippines, the findings of the study of Ejoc and Alferez (2018) showed that the police force of the municipality of Pinamungajan, Cebu did their best under the circumstances they had to work in, but their efforts were not equally recognized by the people of the community. Hence, the need for support from the local officials and the people in the community are important factors that would facilitate the effectiveness of the law enforcement service.

2. Methods

A. Research Design

This study employed the Quantitative Research method. John Creswell (2014) defines quantitative research as an inquiry into a social or human problem, based on testing a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers, and analyzed with statistical procedures, to determine whether the predictive generalizations of the theory hold true.

According to Kothari (2004), quantitative research involves the generation of data in quantitative form that can be subjected to rigorous quantitative analysis formally and rigidly. This approach can be further sub-classified into inferential, experimental, and simulation approaches to research. Quantitative approaches to research center on achieving objectivity, control, and precise measurement. Methodologically, these approaches rely on deductive designs aimed at refuting or building evidence in favor of specific theories and hypotheses (Patricia, 2022).

B. Study Sight and Participants

The study was undertaken in the Municipality of San Manuel, Isabela. San Manuel is a fourth-class municipality in the province of Isabela. San Manuel, formerly Callang, lies in the central-western part of the province of Isabela, bounded on the north by the municipality of Roxas, on the south by the municipality of Aurora, on the east by the municipality of Burgos, all in the province of Isabela, and stretched westward to the municipality of Paracelis in Mt. Province and Potia, now Alfonso Lista, in Ifugao. To date, the municipality of San Manuel is politically subdivided into 19 barangays namely: Agliam, Babauang, Cabaritan, Caraniogan, District 1, District 2, District 3, District, Eden, Malalinta, Mararigue, Neva Era, Pisang, San Francisco, Sandiat Centro, Sandiat East, Sandiat West, Sta. Cruz, and Villanueva.

The participants of the study were the police personnel of San Manuel Police Station and the residents of barangays District 1, 2, 3, and 4 in the municipality. Age stratification reveals that out of 50 PNP personnel respondents, most of them are 31 – 35 years old while most of the barangay residents are 21 - 25 years old. With regards to sex, majority of both PNP personnel and barangay residents are males. The majority of the respondents are married in both groups of respondents. Considering the ranks of PNP personnel, most of them are currently holding the position of Police Master Sergeant (PMSg). In terms of PNP personnel's number of years in service, most of them claimed that they are in service for 6-10 years. Consonant to barangay residents' educational attainment, most of them are college graduates. Most of them belong to families with 1-3 members. Relative to barangay residents' occupation, most of them are farmers. As to average monthly income, most barangay residents affirmed that they currently have an income of Php5,000.00 – Php9,999.00 every month.

C. Population, Sample Size, and Sampling Method

To date, there are 57 personnel at PNP San Manuel. Using purposive sampling, the sample size of the PNP personnel was determined. Only those rendering police visibility strategies

were included as respondents of this study. Hence, 50 or 87.72 percent of the police personnel were included in the study.

Based on the latest population data of the four (4) barangays comprising the Poblacion of the Municipality of San Manuel, Isabela, there is a total of 6,555 (District 1 - 1,867, District 2 – 1,289, District 3 – 1,788, and District 4 – 1,611) barangay residents belonging to the 20-59 years old age bracket. By using the online Raosoft Sample size calculary with 5% margin of error with a 95% level of confidence, the sample size of 363 barangay residents was determined.

D. Instruments

The researcher utilized a survey questionnaire to gather the data vital to the study. It was an adaption of the previous study of Valenzuela and Tamayo (2021) which bears the title “Effects of Police Visibility as Crime Reduction Measure”. It was modified to answer the presented variables. The survey questionnaire has two parts: Police Visibility Strategies in Crime Prevention with nine (9) items; and the Problems Encountered in the Implementation of Police Visibility Strategies in Crime Prevention which composed of sixteen (16) items. It was designed to gather the participants' perception on effectiveness of police visibility strategies as crime prevention and the problems perceived by the respondents in maintaining constant police visibility strategies. Testing of reliability was also facilitated with computed Cronbach's alpha for items on the questionnaire ranged from 0.60 to 0.88 with an overall value of 0.78 from which the questionnaire is considered acceptable and valid for use.

E. Data Gathering Procedure

Before the actual investigation, the researcher sought permission from the Office of the Chief of Police of San Manuel PS and to the Punong Barangays of Poblacion to conduct the study. Upon approval, the researcher personally administered and retrieved the questionnaires to the 50 personnel of San Manuel Police Station and 363 respondents were divided from the residents of población in the Municipality. After the actual floating of questionnaires, the data gathered were tallied and tabulated to facilitate, analysis and interpretation.

F. Data Analysis

The data retrieved from the questionnaire were converted into numerical weight using the Likert 4-point scale. The data collected were analyzed with the use of the following statistical tools:

1. *Frequency*. This was used to get the number of respondents as to different profile variables.
2. *Percentage*. This was used to express the data representing the profile of the respondents
3. *Weighted Mean*. This was used to treat the data in answer to the questions presented in the questionnaires.
4. *Mann-Whitney U Test*. This was used to determine if there is no significant difference in the perceptions of police personnel and barangay residents on the effectiveness of police visibility strategies in crime prevention.

G. Ethical Consideration

To address ethical consideration aspects that may emanate from this study, no individuals were forced to participate. Full consent was obtained from the participants before the conduct of this study. The dignity and well-being of respondents were protected at all times. The researcher discussed with the participants the objectives of the study to make an informed decision on their participation. The data remained confidential throughout the study; however, the researcher obtained permission from the respondents to use their real names in the research whenever necessary. Furthermore, the study was critically reviewed and approved by the research committee to establish content validity and reliability. Likewise, concerning the research manuscript, acknowledgment and referencing were highly observed.

3. Results

Part 1. Effectiveness of Police Visibility Strategies in Crime Prevention

As reflected in Table 1, PNP personnel affirmed that the following police visibility strategies are “very effective” in crime prevention: “It creates fear among potential criminals” and “It familiarizes police personnel with knowledge of the geography of their locale” sharing the highest mean of 3.92, followed by “It serves as a deterrent in consummating crimes” and “It makes authorities more responsive; thus, solving or preventing more crimes” with a common mean of 3.90, “It poses as an anti-terrorism strategy”, “It increases the number of apprehended criminals; thus, reducing crime rates”, and “It shows that the police are more active in pursuit of crimes” which all registered a mean of 3.84, as well as “It reduces the risk of victimization” and “The presence of police in an area reduces crime incidence” with means of 3.82 and 3.80, respectively. The total mean of 3.86 implies that the different police visibility strategies are “very effective” in crime prevention as affirmed by PNP personnel.

The table further reveals that the following police visibility strategies are “effective” as claimed by barangay residents: “It familiarizes police personnel with knowledge of the geography of their locale” with a mean of 3.23, “It increases the number of

apprehended criminals; thus, reducing crime rates” with a mean of 3.18, “It shows that the police are more active in pursuit of crimes” with a mean of 3.17, “It creates fear among potential criminals” with a mean of 3.06, “It serves as a deterrent in consummating crimes” and “The presence of police in an area reduces crime incidence” sharing a mean of 3.05, as well as “It reduces the risk of victimization”, “It makes authorities more responsive; thus, solving or preventing more crimes”, and “It poses as an anti-terrorism strategy” with means of 3.02, 2.96, and 2.93, respectively. The total mean of 3.07 indicates that the different police visibility strategies are “effective” in crime prevention as perceived by barangay residents of Poblacion, San Manuel, Isabela.

Part 2. Test of Significant Difference in the Perceptions of Police Personnel and Residents on the Effectiveness of Police Visibility Strategies in Crime Prevention.

A Mann-Whitney U Test was conducted to compare the Perceptions of Police Personnel and Residents on the Effectiveness of Police Visibility Strategies in Crime Prevention. The test result revealed a significant difference between police personnel and residents responses/assessments regarding the Effectiveness of Police Visibility Strategies in Crime Prevention (U = 2253.000, p = <0.001). Since the p-value is lower than 0.05, the null hypothesis that there is no difference in the perceptions of police personnel and residents on the effectiveness of police visibility strategies in crime prevention is rejected. Therefore, there is a significant difference in the perceptions of police personnel and residents on the effectiveness of police visibility strategies in crime prevention.

Part 3. Problems Encountered in the Implementation of Police Visibility Strategies in Crime Prevention.

Consonant to the problems encountered in the implementation of the different police visibility strategies in crime prevention in the municipality of San Manuel, Isabela, Table 5 shows that PNP personnel claimed that the following problems are “very serious”: “Lack of modern equipment” with the highest mean of 3.52, “Lack of operational budget” with a mean of 3.50, as well as “Lack of vehicle” and “Tardy personnel” with means of 3.48 and 3.40, respectively, while

Table 1

Effectiveness of the police visibility strategies in crime prevention as perceived by police personnel and the residents of the municipality

Indicators	PNP Personnel		Barangay Residents	
	M	Interpretation	M	Interpretation
1. It creates fear among potential criminals	3.92	Very Effective	3.06	Effective
2. It serves as a deterrent in consummating crimes	3.90	Very Effective	3.05	Effective
3. It makes authorities more responsive; thus, solving or preventing more crimes	3.90	Very Effective	2.96	Effective
4. The presence of police in an area reduces crime incidence	3.80	Very Effective	3.05	Effective
5. It poses as an anti-terrorism strategy	3.84	Very Effective	2.93	Effective
6. It familiarizes police personnel with knowledge of the geography of their locale	3.92	Very Effective	3.23	Effective
7. It reduces the risk of victimization	3.82	Very Effective	3.02	Effective
8. It increases the number of apprehended criminals; thus, reducing crime rates	3.84	Very Effective	3.18	Effective
9. It shows that the police are more active in pursuit of crimes	3.84	Very Effective	3.17	Effective
Category Mean	3.86	Very Effective	3.07	Effective

Table 2

Differences in the perceptions of police personnel and residents on the effectiveness of police visibility strategies in crime prevention

	Respondents	N	Mean Rank	U-Test	p-value
Effectiveness of Police Visibility Strategies in Crime Prevention	Police Personnel	363	188.21	2253.000	<0.001
	Residents	50	346.16		
Significant				0.05 level of Significance	

Table 3

Problems encountered in the implementation of police visibility strategies perceived by police personnel and the residents of the municipality

Indicators	PNP Personnel		Residents	
	M	Interpretation	M	Interpretation
1. Lack of personnel	2.94	Serious	3.07	Serious
2. Lack of operational budget	3.50	Very Serious	3.25	Serious
3. Lack of vehicle	3.48	Very Serious	2.79	Serious
4. Incompetent police personnel	2.70	Serious	2.98	Serious
5. Inappropriate police attire	2.80	Serious	2.59	Serious
6. Tardy personnel	3.40	Very Serious	3.11	Serious
7. Low support from the Local Government	2.82	Serious	2.49	Moderately Serious
8. Too Bureaucratic System	3.18	Serious	3.03	Serious
9. Corrupt officers	2.68	Serious	3.24	Serious
10. Unhealthy officers	2.64	Serious	2.81	Serious
11. Lack of modern equipment	3.52	Very Serious	3.09	Serious
12. Lack of empathy	2.82	Serious	3.01	Serious
13. Lack of coordination	2.74	Serious	3.16	Serious
14. Lack of courage	2.74	Serious	2.75	Serious
15. Lack of initiative	2.82	Serious	2.99	Serious
Category Mean	2.99	Serious	2.96	Serious

they on the following problems are “serious”: “Too Bureaucratic System” with a mean of 3.18, “Lack of personnel” with a mean of 2.94, “Low support from the Local Government”, “Lack of empathy”, and “Lack of initiative” which all registered a mean of 2.82, “Inappropriate police attire” at 2.80, “Lack of coordination” and “Lack of courage” sharing a weighted mean of 2.74, “Incompetent police personnel” with a mean of 2.70, as well as “Corrupt officers” and “Unhealthy officers” with weighted means of 2.68 and 2.64, respectively. The category mean of 2.99 indicates that there is a seriousness of the different problems in the implementation of police visibility strategies in preventing crimes in the municipality of San Manuel, Isabela as affirmed by PNP personnel.

Meanwhile, the following problems in the implementation of police visibility strategies in San Manuel, Isabela are “serious”: “Lack of operational budget” with a mean of 3.25, “Corrupt officers” with a mean of 3.24, “Lack of coordination” with a mean of 3.16, “Tardy personnel” at 3.11, “Lack of modern equipment” at 3.09, “Lack of personnel” with a mean of 3.07, “Too Bureaucratic System” at 3.03, “Lack of empathy” at 3.01, “Lack of initiative” with a mean of 2.99, “Incompetent police personnel” at 2.98, “Unhealthy officers” at 2.81, as well as “Lack of vehicle”, “Lack of courage”, and “Inappropriate police attire” with means of 2.79, 2.75, and 2.59, respectively, while “Low support from the Local Government” is “moderately serious” with a mean of 2.49. The category mean of 2.96 indicates that the different problems encountered in the implementation of police visibility strategies as crime preventive measures in the municipality are “serious” as perceived by barangay residents.

4. Discussion

The Following are the Significant and Salient Findings of this Study:

1. As to the effectiveness of the different police visibility strategies in crime prevention, there is a strong claim among PNP personnel that the different strategies are very effective in crime prevention. They strongly believe that police visibility creates fear among potential criminals. It also serves as a deterrent in

consummating crimes. It poses as an anti-terrorism strategy. The presence of police in an area reduces crime incidence as it increases the number of apprehended criminals; thus, reducing the risk of victimization. This is consonant to the findings of Dau et al (2021) that police presence has mostly positive effects on reducing crimes related to motor theft, property, violence, and guns. Police presence also reduces calls for service and improves traffic behavior. It also bears similarity to the findings of the study conducted by Mangai et al (2022) that police-community partnership is essential in curbing crime and strengthening of the police-community partnership is an effective way to reduce crime. The study also supports the contention of Valenzuela and Tamayo (2021) that crime reduction as one of the major purposes of police visibility, is viewed with higher effect than police public relations. The present study also found that police visibility familiarizes police personnel with knowledge of the geography of their locale and it makes authorities more responsive. It shows that police personnel are more active in pursuit of crimes. This is supported by the findings of Kochel and Gau (2019) who claimed that satisfaction with police visibility, satisfaction with police tactics, and police-community engagement were significant predictors of social cohesion, and, through social cohesion, these policing measures indirectly predicted informal social control. On the other hand, residents found these strategies effective in crime prevention.

2. There is a difference in the perceptions of police personnel and residents on the effectiveness of police visibility strategies in crime prevention. This may be attributed to the fact that police personnel are the ones implementing the visibility strategies while residents were not fully aware of the extent of effect of these strategies.
3. In relation to the problems encountered in the implementation of the different police visibility strategies, lack of modern equipment is the leading problem encountered. This is similar to the finding of

Valenzuela and Tamayo (2021) who found that the not updated equipment is a problem. Another problem is the lack of operational budget which is a similar finding of Valenzuela and Tamayo (2021). The present study also found that the problems, lack of vehicle and tardy personnel are very serious, indicating that respondents highly believe that these impede the smooth and successful implementation of the different police visibility strategies. Findings further reveal that the following problems are serious: too bureaucratic system, lack of personnel, low support from the local government, lack of empathy, lack of initiative, inappropriate police attire, lack of coordination, lack of courage, incompetent police personnel, corrupt and unhealthy officers. Some of these findings are similar with the findings of Valenzuela and Tamayo (2021). On the other hand, the extent of these problems' ranges from moderately serious to serious as perceived by barangay residents.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the Following Conclusions are Made:

1. The different police visibility strategies in crime prevention are perceived by PNP personnel as very effective while barangay residents claim that they are effective. Hence, there is a difference in the perceptions of police personnel and residents on the effectiveness of police visibility strategies in crime prevention.
2. Furthermore, there is a seriousness of the problems encountered in the implementation of police visibility strategies in San Manuel, Isabela.

6. Recommendations

Based on the foregoing findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made for implementation:

1. Since the lack of modern equipment is the leading problem encountered by police personnel in the implementation of police visibility strategies, there is a need to upgrade the existing equipment and avail those that are lacking to ensure that the needed equipment are readily available for use during police visibility operations.
2. Another very alarming problem encountered by police personnel is the lack of budget. This must be dealt accordingly to ensure a sustainable budget during police operations.
3. Since the problems encountered in the implementation of police visibility strategies were found to range from serious to very serious, it is recommended that these problems be promptly and properly addressed so that residents of the municipality may receive the full benefits from the said strategies without any impediment or delay.
4. Since it was found that the different police visibility

strategies are effective in crime prevention, there is a need to sustain the efforts of the implementers so that crime will be prevented, and the municipality will remain a peaceful and safe place to live in.

5. Bridging the perception gap between the police and the residents on police visibility, it is recommended to established structured platforms for residents to provide feedback on police visibility strategies, including online surveys, town hall meetings, and community policing forum. Police personnel should actively listen to residents' concerns and perspectives on police visibility. This demonstrates respect and build rapport with the community.
6. There is also a need to implement various interventions to further enhance the implementation of police visibility in the municipality.
7. Moreover, future researchers who would like to venture into conducting studies on topics related to this research study could investigate the best practices in police visibility implementation from other municipalities and adopt them in their respective locality for the enhancement of the implementation of the crime prevention program.

References

- [1] Borovec, K., Balgač, I. & Mraović, I. C. (2019). Police Visibility as an Influencing Factor on Citizens' Perception of Safety. Dissertation. University of Zagreb, Croatia.
- [2] Braga, A. A., et al. (2019). Hot Spots Policing of Small Geographic Areas Effects on Crime. Campbell Systematic Reviews.
- [3] Chan Roble Virtual Law Library. (1990). Philippine Laws, Statutes, and Codes. Retrieved on November 6, 2023 from <http://www.chanrobles.com/republicactno6975.htm#.XZ3Zc1UzbIU>.
- [4] Creswell, J. W. (2014). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- [5] Dau, P. M. (2021). Policing Directions: a Systematic Review on the Effectiveness of Police Presence. *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research*, 1-35.
- [6] Doležal, D. (2019). Understanding Fear of Crime. *Hrvatska Revija za Rehabilitacijska Istraživanja*, 45(2), 1-14.
- [7] Ejoc, J. M. & Alferes, J. A. L. (2018). Police Visibility in the Prevention of Crimes, Pinamungajan Police Station, Cebu: Implications to Effective Law Enforcement Service. Dissertation. Cotabato City State Polytechnic College, Cotabato City, Philippines.
- [8] George, T. (2021). Mixed Methods Research, Definition, Guide and Examples. Retrieved from <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/mixed-methods-research/>.
- [9] Kappeler, E.V., Gaines, K.L. & Schaefer, B.P. (2020). Community Policing: A Contemporary Perspective. New York, NY: Routledge.
- [10] Kochel, T. R. (2018) Applying Police Legitimacy, Cooperation, and Collective Security Hypotheses to Explain Collective Efficacy and Violence across Neighborhoods. *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice* 42(4). Routledge: 253-272.
- [11] Kochel, T. R. & Gau, J. M. (2019) Examining Police Presence, Tactics, and Engagement as Facilitators of Informal Social Control in High-Crime Areas. *Justice Quarterly*. Routledge.
- [12] Kothari, C.R. (2004) Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques. 2nd Edition, New Age International Publishers, New Delhi.
- [13] LGU San Manuel Data. (2023).
- [14] Mangai, M. S. et al. (2022). The Importance of a Police-Community Partnership (Co-production): A Study of the City of Johannesburg. Dissertation. University of Pretoria, South Africa.
- [15] Mwaeke, P. J. M. (2019). Public Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Policing and the Social Costs of Crimes in Nairobi Policing Region, Kenya. Dissertation. Kenyatta University, Kenya.

- [16] Patricia, L. (2022). *Research Design: Quantitative, Qualitative, Mixed Methods, Arts-Based, and Community-Based Participatory Research Approaches*. Guilford Publications.
- [17] Ratcliffe, J. et al. (2020). The Philadelphia Predictive Policing Experiment. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*.
- [18] San Manuel PS Data. (2023)
- [19] Sridharan, M. (2024). Systems Theory of Management. Retrieved on January 19, 2024 from <https://thinkinsights.net/strategy/systems-theory-of-management/>.
- [20] Valenzuela, R. V. V. & Tamayo, M. R. B. (2021). Effects of Police Visibility as Crime Reduction Measure. Thesis. Lyceum of the Philippines (LPU), Batangas Campus, Batangas, Philippines.
- [21] Walker, A., Flatley, J., Kershaw, C., & Moon, D. (Eds.) (2009). *Crime in England and Wales 2008/09*. London: Home Office.
- [22] Warr, M. (2010). Fear of Crime in the United States: Avenues for Research and Policy. *Criminal Justice*, 4(4), 451-489.
- [23] Weston, L. A. (2020). Making the 'Visible' Visible: An Interactional Understanding of Police Visibility in Community Engagement. Dissertation. University of Liverpool, England.
- [24] Yesberg, J., Brunton-Smith, I., & Bradford, B. (2021). Police Visibility, Trust in Police Fairness, and Collective Efficacy: A Multilevel Structural Equation Model. Dissertation. University College London, United Kingdom.