

Personal indicator and legal basis of transformation of the Philippine national police in the cities of Bicol region

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Abstract

This study examined the transformative journey of the Philippine National Police in the Cities of Bicol Region, focusing on the personal indicators and legal frameworks that had shaped its evolution. Anchored in the principles of good governance and public accountability, this research investigated the interplay between individual attributes and institutional mechanisms that had influenced the PNP's reform efforts. Specifically, it identified the personal indicators of transformation, examined the legal basis of transformation, assessed the perceived impact of these changes on community trust and safety, and gauged the level of trust accorded to the PNP by the grassroots community. The findings revealed that demonstration of integrity, updating of knowledge and skills, maintaining professional interactions, adherence to the PNP Code of Conduct, and active participation in organizational transformation initiatives were the key personal indicators of transformation. The legal basis of transformation was rooted in national frameworks such as Republic Act (RA) 6975, RA 8551, and Memorandum from Executive Secretary 2009, LOI 53/09, and the NAPOLCOM Resolution No. 2015-491. The PNP's increased visibility and rapid response times had played a significant role in fostering a culture of transparency and respect for human rights. The results indicated a positive shift in the PNP's image, marked by enhanced integrity, professionalism, and responsiveness, which had collectively contributed to improved community relations and public confidence. In light of these findings, the study offered targeted recommendations to sustain and deepen the PNP's transformation, including investments in human resource development, community engagement, operational support, and accountability mechanisms. These measures were designed to reinforce the PNP's commitment to serving the public with integrity, transparency, and professionalism.

Keywords: Accountability; Community; Governance; Transformation; Transparency

1. Introduction

The Philippine National Police (PNP) was entrenched in a web of legislative mandates aimed at organizational transformation, yet a discernible chasm persisted between national reform strategies and their implementation in the cities of the Bicol Region. Specifically, the interplay between personal indicators of PNP personnel and legal requirements was opaque, obscuring the pathways to meaningful change. Furthermore, community perceptions of transformation and public trust in the PNP revealed inconsistencies in the efficacy of current reform efforts, underscoring the need for a nuanced examination of the complex dynamics at play. Consequently, this study examined these dynamics and identified opportunities for sustainable transformation. The findings underscored the significance of bridging these gaps to achieve meaningful reform. The study provided insights into the complex relationships between personal indicators, legal frameworks, and community perceptions, highlighting the need for context-specific policing approaches. These insights can inform policy adjustments that better align national directives with regional realities. Additionally, the findings underscored the importance of continuous training and community engagement in fostering trust and enhancing police effectiveness.

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The Philippine National Police (PNP) was guided by a range of legislative mandates, including Republic Act (RA) 6975, RA 8551, and executive directives issued between 2009 and 2015, aimed at enhancing professionalism, accountability, and community-oriented policing. These frameworks were aligned with global trends in law enforcement reform, emphasizing the need for personnel to demonstrate adaptive personal indicators. However, systemic challenges, including policy implementation gaps, inconsistent adherence to standards, and public perceptions of corruption or inefficiency, hindered meaningful transformation across PNP units. Consequently, the intended reforms were aspirational, highlighting the complexities of translating policy into practice. Moreover, these challenges underscored the need for a nuanced understanding of the interplay between policy, personnel, and community perceptions, ultimately hampering the PNP's transformation.

The Bicol Region's landscape was characterized by a multifaceted array of security challenges, including rapid urbanization, the emergence of cybercrime, and increasing demands for community engagement, which collectively shaped the operational dynamics of local PNP units. National reform policies were applied uniformly, but their adaptation to the regional context was understudied, particularly in city-level PNP units. Preliminary observations revealed discrepancies between legal mandates and practical implementation, as well as variability in how individual personnel attributes influenced participation in transformation initiatives. This examination highlighted the need to contextualize national reforms within regional specificities, underscoring the complexities of policy translation in diverse settings. These findings suggested that regional nuances significantly influenced the efficacy of PNP transformation efforts.

The disparity between policy intent and implementation was evident in community perceptions of PNP performance. Public trust, gauged through perceptions of community policing, transparency, and adherence to legal mandates, varied across Bicol's cities. Little empirical evidence linked PNP personnel's personal indicators to legal compliance and public trust, underscoring a critical knowledge gap. This study addressed this gap by examining the interplay of personal indicators, legal frameworks, and community perceptions, identifying barriers and proposing targeted measures for sustainable transformation in PNP city units. The findings highlighted the importance of contextualizing national reforms within regional settings. The PNP's transformation was characterized by an emphasis on embedding positive achievements into its operational framework. Governance values were integrated into the peace and order agenda among KASUROG Cops and the community, highlighting the significance of standardizing effective police practices.

2. Methodology

This study employed a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design, wherein quantitative data collection and analysis were initially utilized to measure personal indicators, followed by qualitative inquiry to contextualize the findings within the framework of existing legal structures (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This approach enabled a comprehensive understanding of the transformation process, integrating numerical data and narrative insights to provide a nuanced understanding of the research problem. The use of this design facilitated a deeper exploration of the research question, revealing the intricacies of PNP transformation. The findings subsequently provided valuable insights into the interplay between personal indicators, legal frameworks, and community perceptions, highlighting areas for improvement and informing recommendations for future transformation efforts.

Quantitative data were collected from five (5) personnel (commissioned and non-commissioned officers) of the City Police Stations, using quota sampling to ensure representation across the cities. A judgmental sampling method (Patton, 2015) and purposive sampling (Creswell, 2014) were used to identify six (6) respondents from the grassroots communities in the identified cities of the Bicol Region. Data collection methods had included structured questionnaires with closed-ended items to measure personal indicators (Fowler, 2014), document analysis of legal texts to examine the legal basis governing PNP transformation, and semi-structured interviews to explore how legal provisions were operationalized and perceived by personnel, ensuring a comprehensive data triangulation process.

Document analysis involved reviewing legal texts, including the Philippine Constitution, Republic Acts, and PNP regulations. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with PNP personnel and community members to gather insights into the operationalization and perception of legal provisions. Thematic analysis was employed to code legal provisions and interview data, identifying patterns in how legal frameworks influenced personal attributes and organizational change (Braun & Clarke, 2006), thereby extracting nuanced insights from complex qualitative information sources effectively.

3. Results and Discussion

The findings of the study were summarized as follows:

3.1. Personal Indicators of Transformation

Table 1 Personal Indicators of PNP Transformation

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Demonstrate integrity in carrying out police duties.	4.43	Strongly Agree
Continuously update my knowledge and skills through seminars and trainings.	4.29	Strongly Agree
Maintain professionalism in interactions with the community.	4.37	Strongly Agree
Adhere to ethical standards outlined in the PNP Code of Conduct.	4.46	Strongly Agree
Actively participate in initiatives aimed at organizational transformation.	4.34	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	4.38	Strongly Agree

Legend:
 4.21 – 5.00 Strongly Agree
 3.41 – 4.20 Agree
 2.61 – 3.40 Neutral
 1.81 – 2.60 Disagree
 1.00 – 1.80 Strong Disagree

Formula:

$$5 - 1 = 4 / 5 = 0.80$$

The personal indicators of transformation for PNP personnel had been identified, including the demonstration of integrity, updating of knowledge and skills, maintaining professional interactions, adherence to the PNP Code of Conduct, and active participation in initiatives aimed at organizational transformation. Respondents had strongly agreed with all indicators, suggesting a positive perception of their own transformation. The top indicator had been the "Adherence to ethical standards outlined in the PNP Code of Conduct" (mean = 4.46), highlighting the importance of ethics in police work. This result was consistent with the literature, which had emphasized the critical role of ethics in shaping police behavior and promoting public trust (Prenzler, 2015). For the community, personal indicators of transformation had included responsiveness to community concern, accountability to community, and behaviors/actions of transformation. These results suggested that community members had valued police officers who were responsive, accountable, and demonstrated positive behaviors.

3.2. Legal Basis of Transformation

Table 2.a Legal Documents of Transformation along Familiarity

Familiarity	Mean	Interpretation
R.A. 6975 or the "DILG Act of 1990"	3.83	Very Familiar
R.A. 8551 or the "PNP Reform and Reorganization Act of 1998"	4.00	Very Familiar
Memorandum from Executive Secretary dated July 9, 2009 entitled "Institutionalization of Performance Governance System in the Six National Government Agencies"	3.89	Very Familiar
LOI 53/09 dated August 11, 2009 entitled "Institutionalization of Performance Governance System"	3.83	Very Familiar
NAPOLCOM Resolution No. 2015-491 dated October 14, 2015 entitled "Establishment and Activation of Police Strategy Management Unit in all PNP Units/Offices"	4.03	Very Familiar
Overall Mean	3.92	Very Familiar

Legend:
 4.21 – 5.00 Expert
 3.41 – 4.20 Very Familiar
 2.61 – 3.40 Moderately Familiar
 1.81 – 2.60 Slightly Familiar
 1.00 – 1.80 Unfamiliar

Table 2.b Legal Documents of Transformation along Effectiveness

Effectiveness	Mean	Interpretation
R.A. 6975 or the “DILG Act of 1990”	4.09	Effective
R.A. 8551 or the “PNP Reform and Reorganization Act of 1998”	4.17	Effective
Memorandum from Executive Secretary dated July 9, 2009 entitled “Institutionalization of Performance Governance System in the Six National Government Agencies”	4.11	Effective
LOI 53/09 dated August 11, 2009 entitled “Institutionalization of Performance Governance System”	4.00	Effective
NAPOLCOM Resolution No. 2015-491 dated October 14, 2015 entitled “Establishment and Activation of Police Strategy Management Unit in all PNP Units/Offices”	4.11	Effective
Overall Mean	4.10	Effective

Legend:

4.21 – 5.00	Very Effective
3.41 – 4.20	Effective
2.61 – 3.40	Neutral
1.81 – 2.60	Ineffective
1.00 – 1.80	Very Effective

Legal Basis of Transformation. The PNP transformation was underpinned by key national frameworks, including Republic Act (RA) No. 6975, RA No. 8551, and Memorandum from E.S. 2009, LOI 53/09, and NAPOLCOM RESOLUTION No. 2015-491. Respondents had demonstrated a high level of familiarity with these legal documents (overall mean score = 3.92) and had considered them effective (overall mean score = 4.10) in governing PNP transformation. This indicated that PNP personnel had a strong grasp of the legal frameworks guiding their work, facilitating the implementation of transformation initiatives.

Significant Transformation as Perceived by the Viewing Public. The PNP's transformation had exerted a profound influence on community dynamics, yielding enhancements in safety, trust, and collaboration. Respondents had noted improvements in police integrity, visibility, and response times, which had contributed to diminished social issues and heightened community cooperation. These findings were consonant with extant literature that had emphasized the critical role of police-community partnerships in fostering public safety (Gill et al., 2018).

3.3. Level of Trust

Table 3 Level of Trust by the Grassroots/Community Respondents to the Members of the Philippine National Police in the Cities of Bicol Region

Level of Trust	Mean	Interpretation
Trust and Integrity		
I believe the local police are honest and act with integrity	3.90	Agree
I have confidence that the police will do the right thing for the community.	3.93	Agree
The police in my city are approachable and treat everyone with respect.	4.17	Agree
Overall Mean	4.00	Strongly Agree
Effectiveness		
The police respond quickly (within 5 – 10 minutes) to calls for help.	3.48	Agree
Police Patrols are visible and make me feel safe in my neighborhood.	4.05	Agree
The police are effective in solving crimes and catching lawbreakers.	3.90	Agree
Overall Mean	3.81	Strongly Agree
Programs		

I support and feel the impact of the police response in our area.	4.05	Agree
I support police presence, community relations activities, and PNP trainings and seminars to our barangay.	4.26	Strongly Agree
I support the PNP in maintaining peace and order in our area.	4.43	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	4.18	Strongly Agree

Legend:

4.21 – 5.00	Strongly Agree
3.41 – 4.20	Agree
2.61 – 3.40	Neutral
1.81 – 2.60	Disagree
1.00 – 1.80	Strongly Disagree

Level of Trust by the Respondents to the Members of the Philippine National Police. The PNP had garnered substantial community support, as evidenced by respondents' positive perceptions. High mean scores had been recorded for Trust and Integrity (4.00), Effectiveness (3.81), and Programs (4.18), underscoring the PNP's success in building trust. Consequently, this outcome indicated that the PNP had achieved significant strides in cultivating a collaborative partnership with the community. Furthermore, these findings suggested a strong foundation for continued cooperation. Notably, the PNP's efforts had contributed to a positive perception of its role in promoting public safety and trust.

3.4. Recommended Measures to Effect the Transformation

The transformative efforts of the PNP had been underscored by recommendations from both personnel and the community, highlighting areas for growth and improvement. Specifically, PNP personnel had emphasized the need for human resource development, community engagement, and operational support, acknowledging the importance of investing in human capital and enhancing operational capabilities. Correspondingly, the community had prioritized responsiveness, accessibility, and accountability, stressing the need for sustained rapid response times, expanded services to remote areas, and clearer legal boundaries on police authority. Notably, these divergent perspectives had converged on the critical role of trust-building initiatives in fostering effective police-community relations, underscoring the PNP's recognition of the need for a multifaceted approach to building trust and cooperation with the community.

4. Conclusion

The transformation of the Philippine National Police (PNP) in the Bicol Region was a complex process involving the interplay of personal indicators, legal frameworks, and community perceptions. This study examined these dynamics, revealing that PNP personnel and community members held positive perceptions of the transformation efforts. Specifically, integrity, accountability, and community engagement emerged as crucial elements in this process. The findings highlighted key areas for improvement, including the expansion of rapid response capabilities to remote areas, addressing gaps in response times, and prioritizing personnel welfare. The PNP's shift towards a community-centric model and its emphasis on human rights and professional integrity were notable achievements. However, sustaining this success required continued efforts to balance community relations with swift law enforcement and address institutional challenges. The recommended measures provided a roadmap for further transformation, underscoring the importance of investing in human capital, engaging with the community, and improving operational capabilities.

Compliance with ethical standards

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest to disclose.

Statement of ethical approval

The research was conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the institution and the research committee.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and their confidentiality was maintained throughout the study.

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