

Police Omnipresence Program and Practices: Views of Police Officers in Cebu City

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Abstract

This study explored the views of police officers regarding Police Omnipresence Programs and Practices in Cebu City, Cebu, Philippines. Anchored on the Routine Activity Theory of Cohen & Felson (1979), supported by the Broken Windows Theory of Wilson & Kelling (1982) and the Deterrence Theory of Becker (1968), the study examined police officers' experiences, perceived impacts, challenges, and aspirations related to police omnipresence implementation. The research employed a qualitative transcendental phenomenological design following Moustakas (1994). Data were gathered through individual in-depth interviews and focus group discussions using a validated interview guide. Ten Philippine National Police patrol officers assigned to the Police Omnipresence Program and with at least two years of patrol experience were selected through purposive sampling. Data were analyzed using Colaizzi's (1978) method. Findings revealed that police omnipresence positively contributed to public safety, crime deterrence, and stronger police-community relations through visible police presence and active community engagement. Officers reported that visible policing increased public trust, encouraged community cooperation, and enhanced their professional growth, communication skills, and interpersonal expertise. However, challenges such as limited personnel, inadequate equipment, operational strain, insufficient coverage, and lack of recognition negatively affected implementation and officer morale. Informants also emphasized the importance of stronger collaboration with stakeholders, efficient personnel deployment, improved communication systems, and enhanced operational planning to strengthen the sustainability and effectiveness of the program. The study concluded that police omnipresence remains an important strategy for crime prevention and public reassurance but requires adequate resources, strengthened partnerships, and community-oriented policing approaches to improve operational efficiency and public trust. The study supports Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 on Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions by promoting effective law enforcement and safer communities, as well as SDG 11 on Sustainable Cities and Communities through proactive public safety initiatives. The study contributes to institutional, governance, and community sustainability by promoting collaborative crime prevention, public confidence, and long-term social cohesion.

Keywords: Accountability, Community Engagement, Community Policing, Crime Prevention, Police Omnipresence, Police Visibility, Public Safety, Routine Activity Theory, Sustainable Communities, Urban Policing

1. Introduction

Police omnipresence refers to the visible and continuous presence of law enforcement personnel in public spaces to deter crime, maintain order, and strengthen public confidence in the police. Internationally, countries such as Japan and the United Kingdom utilize police visibility and community policing to enhance public safety and foster trust between citizens and law enforcement. However, concerns remain regarding the possible misuse of police omnipresence in ways that may compromise civil liberties and democratic principles (Crawford, 2006). In the Philippines, police omnipresence has become a central strategy in crime prevention, particularly in urban areas with high crime rates. Programs promoting police visibility, including patrols and checkpoints, are intended to deter criminal activities and improve public security. Nonetheless, these strategies have also generated concerns regarding over-policing, human rights violations, and diminished public trust, especially during intensified anti-drug operations (Bautista, 2019). In Cebu City, police omnipresence has been implemented through increased patrol operations and checkpoints to address crimes such as theft, illegal drugs, and public disturbances. While these efforts aim to improve community safety and police responsiveness, issues regarding equitable enforcement and civil rights continue to emerge. This study explores the views of police officers regarding police omnipresence programs and practices in Cebu City, Cebu, Philippines. It examines their perspectives on the implementation of omnipresence strategies, their effects on police work-life, and aspirations for improving program implementation.

1.1 Background of Police Omnipresence Programs and Practices in Cebu City

Police omnipresence is widely recognized as a crime prevention strategy that enhances public safety through visible law enforcement presence. International studies emphasize that police visibility contributes to deterrence, reassurance, and stronger police-community relations. Japan and several European countries employ visible policing and community-

oriented approaches to increase citizens' sense of security and trust in law enforcement (Crawford, 2006). In the Philippine setting, police omnipresence became more prominent through intensified patrol operations and visibility programs designed to deter criminality and maintain peace and order. Strategies such as "Oplan Tambay" and anti-drug patrol operations increased police presence in public spaces to discourage illegal activities (Bautista, 2019). However, scholars and communities have raised concerns regarding over-policing, extrajudicial practices, and violations of civil liberties, especially in marginalized communities. In Cebu City, police omnipresence is implemented through foot patrols, mobile checkpoints, and heightened police deployment in densely populated and commercial areas. These initiatives seek to prevent crimes, improve response capability, and enhance public trust. Nevertheless, concerns regarding aggressive enforcement and disproportionate targeting of vulnerable populations remain significant issues. The researcher's interest in this study stems from professional involvement in criminology education and a desire to understand how police omnipresence influences community safety, crime prevention, and police-community relations.

1.2 Themes and Insights on Police Omnipresence, Crime Prevention, and Community Policing

Existing literature highlights several themes regarding police omnipresence, including crime deterrence, public reassurance, surveillance, community trust, and proactive policing. Studies suggest that visible policing reduces opportunities for crime and increases perceived risks among offenders (Clarke, 1997; Becker, 1968). Police visibility also strengthens citizens' feelings of safety and encourages cooperation with law enforcement (Britain & Jackson, 2012; Reisig, 2000). Community policing literature emphasizes that omnipresence supports stronger relationships between police officers and communities. Visible patrols make officers more approachable and encourage citizens to report crimes and cooperate in investigations (Cavalcanti, 2017; Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 2008; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Reassurance policing studies likewise show that police visibility reduces fear of crime even when actual crime rates remain unchanged (Innes, 2004; Boeije, 2009). Research further indicates that omnipresence contributes to surveillance and social regulation within communities (Brodeur, 2010; Loader, 1997). High-visibility patrols in crime-prone areas disrupt criminal activities and increase perceptions of police legitimacy (Harcourt and Ludwig, 2006; Honken and Ralston, 2013). Studies conducted in New York City, Singapore, Mexico City, Metro Manila, and Liberia similarly found that visible policing improves public confidence and deters criminal behavior (MacDonald & Strokes, 2006; Koh, 2023; Quinton & Tuffin, 2007; Davis, 2020; Baker, 2010). However, several studies also caution against the negative consequences of excessive police visibility. Del Rosario (2020) found that while police omnipresence reduced street crimes in Metro Manila, it also generated concerns about harassment, over-policing, and civil rights violations. Similarly, literature emphasizes that visible policing must be balanced with accountability, legitimacy, and respect for human rights to maintain public trust (Crawford, 2006; Bautista, 2019).

1.3 Local, National, and Global Context of Police Omnipresence Programs

Globally, police omnipresence is practiced as part of crime prevention and public reassurance strategies. Countries such as Japan and the United Kingdom utilize visible policing to maintain order and strengthen public confidence in law enforcement. International research also recognizes omnipresence as a mechanism for surveillance, deterrence, and social regulation (Brodeur, 2010; Loader, 1997). Nationally, the Philippines employs police visibility programs to address criminality, maintain peace and order, and combat illegal drugs. The Duterte administration intensified police patrols and checkpoints as part of anti-drug and anti-crime campaigns, resulting in both support for crime reduction and criticism regarding human rights concerns (Bautista, 2019). Locally, Cebu City continues to implement police omnipresence through patrol operations, checkpoints, and visible police deployment in commercial areas, transportation hubs, and densely populated communities. These initiatives aim to reduce criminal activities, improve response time, and enhance public safety. Nevertheless, the growing urban population and expanded territorial coverage create operational challenges in sustaining police visibility (Gayon, 1995).

1.4 Theoretical and Legal Foundations of Police Omnipresence Programs and Practices

This study is anchored on the Routine Activity Theory of Cohen & Felson (1979), supported by the Broken Windows Theory of Wilson and Kelling (1982) and the Deterrence Theory of Becker (1968). Routine Activity Theory explains that crime occurs when a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of capable guardians converge in time and space (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Police omnipresence functions as capable guardianship that reduces opportunities for crime and enhances situational crime prevention (Felson, 2002). Broken Windows Theory posits that maintaining order and addressing minor disorders discourage more serious criminal activities (Wilson & Kelling, 1982). Visible policing contributes to maintaining public order, reinforcing community vigilance, and preventing escalation of criminal behavior (Kelling & Coles, 1996). Deterrence Theory argues that individuals evaluate the costs and benefits of committing crimes, and increased certainty of apprehension discourages criminal behavior (Becker, 1968). Police omnipresence increases the perceived likelihood of detection and punishment, thereby deterring criminal activities. The study is also legally anchored on PNP Memorandum Circular No. 2023-017 and PNP Memorandum Circular No. 2022-112, which emphasize intensified patrol operations and police visibility. Additional legal foundations include Republic Act No. 6975, Republic Act No. 8551, Republic Act No. 7160, Republic Act No. 9165, Republic Act No. 7484, and RA 6977, all of which support community policing, public safety, and police-community collaboration.

1.5 Research Gaps and Rationale on Police Officers' Views of Police Omnipresence Programs and Practices

Although numerous international and national studies discuss the effectiveness of police omnipresence in crime prevention and public reassurance, limited studies specifically explore the lived experiences and perspectives of police officers implementing these programs in Cebu City. Existing research primarily focuses on crime reduction outcomes, public perceptions, and policy implications rather than the work-life impact on patrol officers and their aspirations for improving implementation. Furthermore, concerns regarding over-policing, civil liberties, operational challenges, and police-community relations indicate the need for localized studies that examine how police officers themselves perceive omnipresence strategies. This study addresses these gaps by exploring the views of police officers regarding police omnipresence programs and practices in Cebu City, Cebu, Philippines.

1.6 Alignment of Police Omnipresence Programs with Relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

This study aligns with several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 16 – Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, which promotes peaceful and inclusive societies, effective institutions, and access to justice. Police omnipresence programs contribute to crime prevention, public safety, and strengthened law enforcement institutions. The study also relates to SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities by supporting safer urban environments through proactive policing and community engagement. Police visibility and effective patrol operations contribute to safer public spaces, especially in highly populated urban areas. Additionally, the study indirectly supports SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-Being because improved public safety and reduced crime contribute to community well-being, reduced fear, and improved quality of life.

1.7 Importance of Police Omnipresence Programs to Multidisciplinary Sustainability

This study contributes to socio-economic sustainability by promoting safer communities that support economic activities, tourism, and public confidence. Effective police omnipresence can reduce crime-related disruptions and enhance community stability. The study also contributes to institutional and governance sustainability by examining how police visibility strategies influence public trust, accountability, and effective law enforcement operations. Findings may support policy refinement, improved resource allocation, and enhanced police-community relations. In terms of community sustainability, the study highlights the importance of collaborative crime prevention and shared responsibility between law enforcement agencies, local government units, and citizens. By understanding police officers' perspectives, the study may help strengthen community-oriented policing approaches that promote long-term peace, public order, and social cohesion.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study employed a qualitative research design using transcendental phenomenology based on the principles identified by Moustakas (1994). Qualitative research seeks to understand phenomena within their natural settings by examining participants' lived experiences. Transcendental phenomenology emphasizes the description of participants' experiences while minimizing researcher interpretation. The researcher practiced bracketing by setting aside personal experiences and biases to focus on the informants' descriptions of their experiences. The phenomenological process involved identifying the phenomenon, collecting data from individuals who experienced it, identifying significant statements, clustering themes, and describing both the essence and structure of the participants' experiences. This approach was considered appropriate because the study aimed to explore the lived experiences and perspectives of Philippine National Police patrol officers assigned to police omnipresence programs and practices (Moustakas, 1994).

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in Cebu City, located in Central Visayas, Philippines. Cebu City covers approximately 315 square kilometers with a population of 964,169 based on the 2020 Philippine Statistics Authority report. Known as the "Queen City of the South," Cebu City serves as a major center for commerce, education, tourism, and business processing outsourcing in the southern Philippines. Cebu City is politically subdivided into 80 barangays grouped into two congressional districts. As one of the country's major urban centers, the city experiences rapid urbanization and increasing public safety concerns. The Cebu City Police Office (CCPO), operating under Police Regional Office 7 (PRO-7), is responsible for maintaining peace and order in the city. The CCPO manages 11 police stations and approximately 1,000 to 1,200 uniformed personnel assigned to various operational units, including patrol operations and the Police Omnipresence Program.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The informants of the study were Philippine National Police officers assigned to the Police Omnipresence Program in Cebu City. The study focused on patrol officers who had rendered at least two years of service and had direct experience in patrol deployment. The researcher selected ten informants who met the established criteria. The selection was based on their experiences and involvement in police omnipresence operations, enabling them to provide substantial insights regarding the implementation and impact of the program.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study utilized purposive sampling in selecting the informants. The researcher carefully identified patrol officers who possessed relevant experiences and qualifications necessary for the study. Specifically, informants were selected based on their assignment to police omnipresence operations and their minimum of two years of service as patrol officers. The researcher coordinated with the Cebu City Police Office to secure permission and identify qualified participants. The sampling process ensured that selected informants could provide meaningful descriptions of their lived experiences and perspectives regarding police omnipresence programs and practices.

2.5 Research Instrument

The researcher developed an interview guide to gather the views and experiences of the informants. The interview guide was validated by the research panel to ensure that the contents aligned with the study's statement of the problem and sub-problems. The instrument focused on three major areas: the informants' views regarding police omnipresence programs and practices, the impact of the program on their work-life, and their aspirations for improving program implementation. The interview guide served as the primary instrument in conducting the individual in-depth interviews and focus group discussion.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher first submitted a transmittal letter to the Chief of Police of Cebu City requesting permission to conduct the study. The letter included the researcher's background, the nature of the study, research design, significance of the study, and the request to conduct interviews with patrol officers. Ethical approval was also secured from the Ethics Committee before data collection commenced. After approval was granted, the researcher scheduled individual in-depth interviews with the informants in locations where they felt safe and comfortable. The objectives, procedures, confidentiality measures, and rights of the participants were explained before obtaining signed informed consent forms. Data collection involved individual in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Informants were informed that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time without consequences. Audio recording was utilized during interviews with participants' consent. The researcher ensured proper documentation and transcription of the interviews. The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim and translated into English prior to data analysis.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

The study utilized Colaizzi's (1987) method in analyzing qualitative data. The researcher repeatedly read the transcripts to gain a general understanding of the participants' experiences. Significant statements were identified and extracted from the transcripts, after which meanings were formulated and categorized into themes and clusters. The formulated meanings were organized into emergent themes that described the phenomenon under study. An exhaustive description of the participants' experiences was then developed, followed by the identification of the fundamental structure of the phenomenon. Validation of the findings was conducted by returning the results to the informants to ensure that the descriptions accurately reflected their lived experiences.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

The study observed ethical principles including confidentiality, privacy, beneficence, non-maleficence, justice, and autonomy. Participants were informed that all responses would remain confidential and used solely for academic purposes. Consent forms explained the objectives of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and the participants' rights. The researcher protected participants' identities by using pseudonyms and ensuring that no identifying information appeared in reports or presentations. Sensitive topics were approached with empathy and respect, and participants retained the right to terminate their participation at any time. The study also ensured trustworthiness through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability as discussed by Sandelowski (1993) and Guba (1981). Reflexivity and bracketing were practiced to minimize researcher bias and ensure that findings were grounded on the participants' actual narratives and experiences.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Views of Police Officers on Police Omnipresence Programs and Practices

3.1.1 Riveting on Safety and Security

The informants expressed positive experiences regarding the Police Omnipresence Program, particularly in promoting safety and reducing crime in their assigned areas. Officers assigned in Colon Street, D. Jakosalem Street, Metro Colon, and other busy locations observed that visible police presence contributed to decreased criminal activities and improved peace and order. Informants also shared that residents, business owners, devotees, and visitors frequently expressed gratitude and appreciation for police visibility, which motivated officers to continue performing their duties effectively. The findings indicate that visible policing strengthens public confidence and enhances the sense of security among community members. This supports the Routine Activity Theory of Lawrence E. Cohen and Marcus Felson (1979), which emphasizes the role

of capable guardianship in reducing crime opportunities. The findings are consistent with Sherman & Weisburd (1995), who found that increased police visibility in high-crime areas significantly reduced criminal activities. Similarly, Braga & Weisburd (2010) emphasized that visible policing and rapid response contribute to stronger public safety and improved community well-being.

3.1.2 Highlighting Community Appreciation

The informants described how the public appreciated their presence, especially in crowded areas such as Basilica Santo Niño, Carbon Public Market, and Taboan Public Market. They observed that vendors, shoppers, devotees, and residents felt safer when police officers were actively patrolling and monitoring the area. Community members also became more cooperative by providing information regarding suspicious activities and potential crimes. These findings demonstrate that police omnipresence fosters stronger police-community relationships and increases public trust in law enforcement. The findings support Routine Activity Theory by Lawrence E. Cohen and Marcus Felson (1979), which explains that police visibility serves as capable guardianship that deters criminal behavior. The results also align with Braga & Weisburd (2019), who found that focused police presence in high-crime areas enhances public safety and community appreciation. Tyler (2004) further explained that community recognition strengthens cooperation and compliance with law enforcement.

3.1.3 Resource Constraints Impeding Effective Coverage

The informants identified lack of personnel and inadequate equipment as major challenges affecting the effectiveness of the Police Omnipresence Program. Officers stated that limited manpower prevented them from covering all strategic areas, especially during peak hours and night shifts. Informants also noted that insufficient communication devices and simultaneous incidents delayed police response and increased opportunities for theft and other crimes. The findings suggest that inadequate resources weaken police visibility and reduce the effectiveness of crime prevention efforts. This supports Routine Activity Theory, which states that crime occurs when capable guardianship is absent (Cohen & Felson, 1979). The results are consistent with Weisburd and Eck (2004), who emphasized that police effectiveness depends heavily on adequate visibility and patrol presence. Frydl and Skogan (2004) also explained that understaffing and limited logistical support reduce patrol visibility and create gaps in community safety coverage.

3.1.4 Strain of Personnel Tantamount to Crimes

The informants expressed frustration and dissatisfaction when crimes still occurred despite their presence in the area. They explained that insufficient personnel prevented full area coverage, making certain locations vulnerable to criminal activities. Some officers also experienced discouragement due to the lack of cooperation from establishments and the tendency of the public to blame the police when incidents occurred. These findings reveal that personnel strain negatively affects police morale and operational effectiveness. The findings support Deterrence Theory, which emphasizes that crime prevention depends on the certainty and visibility of law enforcement presence (Becker, 1968). When police visibility decreases because of personnel shortages, offenders perceive lower risks of apprehension. Papachristos & Hureau (2014) similarly found that limited police coverage contributes to persistent criminal behavior. Brandl (2019) also explained that excessive workload and understaffing reduce police vigilance and weaken crime prevention efforts.

3.1.5 The Burden of Unseen Effort

The informants shared feelings of discouragement when their efforts were overlooked by the public despite their constant patrols and monitoring. Officers assigned in crowded areas near schools, markets, and commercial establishments reported receiving complaints about the absence of police presence even when they were actively conducting patrol operations. They also described the difficulty of managing large crowds and covering wide operational areas with limited resources. The findings highlight the emotional and psychological burden experienced by officers whose efforts often go unrecognized. This supports Broken Windows Theory by James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling (1982), which emphasizes the importance of maintaining order and addressing minor problems to prevent more serious crimes. Kelling and Coles (1996) explained that proactive policing efforts are often unnoticed until problems escalate. Violanti et al. (2017) further noted that the hidden stress and exhaustion experienced by police officers contribute to burnout and reduced job satisfaction.

3.2 Impact of Police Omnipresence Programs on the Work-Life of Informants

3.2.1 Professional Growth through Community Engagement

The informants shared that their experiences under the Police Omnipresence Program improved their discipline, commitment, communication skills, and ability to manage stressful situations. Officers explained that regular interactions with the public helped them become more patient, understanding, and effective in handling different community concerns and operational challenges. Positive feedback from the community also motivated them to continue providing quality public service. These findings indicate that community engagement contributes significantly to the professional growth of police officers. The findings support Broken Windows Theory by James Q. Wilson & Kelling (1982), which highlights the importance of police-community interaction in maintaining public order. Skogan (2006) found that community policing

strategies improve officers' communication and conflict-resolution skills. Davis & Geller (2019) also emphasized that continuous engagement and professional development strengthen officers' effectiveness and adaptability in policing.

3.2.2 Refining Interpersonal Expertise

The informants reported improvements in their interpersonal skills, including communication, crowd management, negotiation, coordination, and stress management. Officers explained that constant interaction with vendors, shoppers, students, and community members enhanced their ability to socialize, coordinate operations, and respond effectively to incidents. The findings suggest that police omnipresence programs help officers develop stronger interpersonal and communication skills necessary for effective community policing. This supports Routine Activity Theory by Lawrence E. Cohen & Marcus Felson (1979), which emphasizes the importance of capable guardianship in maintaining public safety. Tyler (2004) explained that respectful and empathetic interactions strengthen public trust and police legitimacy. McKenna & O'Reilly (2017) further emphasized that interpersonal skills, empathy, and active listening are essential in building positive police-community relationships and improving policing outcomes.

3.3 Aspirations of Informants to Improve Police Omnipresence Programs and Practices

3.3.1 Strengthened Partnerships Through Collaboration

The informants emphasized the importance of stronger coordination with barangay officials, stakeholders, establishment owners, and community members to improve the implementation of the Police Omnipresence Program. Officers expressed aspirations to strengthen communication, leadership skills, and community engagement through training and collaborative efforts. They believed that stronger partnerships would result in more effective crime prevention and operational efficiency. These findings demonstrate that collaboration among stakeholders is essential for successful community policing and crime prevention. The findings support Routine Activity Theory by Lawrence E. Cohen and Marcus Felson (1979), which highlights the importance of capable guardianship through collective efforts. Sampson and Groves (1989) found that communities with strong social cohesion and collaboration with law enforcement experience lower crime rates. Nix (2020) also emphasized that partnerships between police agencies and community organizations enhance crime prevention strategies and public trust.

3.3.2 Optimizing Operational Efficiency

The informants expressed the need for more organized patrol systems, efficient personnel deployment, stronger coordination with barangay workers and security personnel, and improved communication tools. Officers believed that proper planning, modern equipment, and systematic patrol scheduling would enhance operational efficiency and improve peace and order maintenance in their assigned areas. The findings indicate that operational efficiency is essential in improving police visibility, response capability, and crime prevention effectiveness. These findings support Deterrence Theory, which explains that visible and efficient law enforcement operations increase the perceived risk of apprehension among offenders (Becker, 1968). Mazerolle et al. (2013) emphasized that improved communication and stronger community relationships enhance policing effectiveness. Ratcliffe (2025) further noted that intelligence-led policing and the integration of modern technologies improve operational efficiency, strategic deployment, and proactive public safety measures.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The study concluded that the Police Omnipresence Program and Practices in Cebu City positively contributed to public safety, crime deterrence, and stronger police-community relations through visible police presence and active community engagement. Police officers viewed the program as effective in enhancing safety and gaining public appreciation; however, challenges such as limited personnel, inadequate resources, operational strain, and lack of recognition affected the effectiveness of implementation. The program also contributed to the professional growth of officers by improving their communication, interpersonal, and community engagement skills. Furthermore, the informants emphasized the importance of stronger collaboration among stakeholders, improved coordination, efficient personnel deployment, and better operational systems to enhance the implementation and sustainability of the program.

Police officers, the Philippine National Police, NAPOLCOM, Chiefs of Police, Local Government Units, and the Department of the Interior and Local Government should strengthen the implementation of the Police Omnipresence Program through improved community engagement, enhanced communication and leadership training, adequate resource allocation, effective deployment strategies, and stronger collaboration with stakeholders and local communities. Efforts should also focus on supporting officer well-being, improving patrol coordination, utilizing modern equipment and technology, and promoting community-oriented policing to strengthen public trust, operational efficiency, and public safety. Future studies should further examine the effectiveness of police omnipresence across different areas, explore the perspectives of both officers and community members, and assess the role of technology and inter-agency collaboration in improving police visibility and crime prevention efforts.

The study was limited to ten police officers deployed under the Police Omnipresence Program in Cebu City who had at

least two years of experience in patrol operations. The research focused only on the views, experiences, impacts, and aspirations of the selected informants using a qualitative phenomenological approach and individual interviews. The findings may not fully represent the perspectives of all police officers or community members involved in police omnipresence operations in other locations or contexts.

Compliance with ethical standards

The researchers observed ethical principles including confidentiality, privacy, beneficence, non-maleficence, justice, and autonomy throughout the conduct of the study. Participants were informed that all responses would remain confidential and would be used solely for academic purposes. The researchers explained the objectives, procedures, voluntary nature of participation, and participants' rights before the conduct of the study. Pseudonyms were used to protect participants' identities, and no identifying information was included in reports or presentations. Sensitive topics were approached with empathy and respect, and participants retained the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Trustworthiness was ensured through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, while reflexivity and bracketing were practiced to minimize researcher bias and ensure that findings were grounded on the participants' actual experiences.

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