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Building Bridges and Strengthening Bonds: Exploring the Impact of Community Engagement on Enhancing Police-Community Relationships

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Abstract. Community engagement initiatives have become essential in fostering positive relationships between the police and local communities. This study aims to know the effects and impacts of such initiatives on enhancing police-community relationships in Baguio City and to identify the factors that contribute to the effectiveness of these engagement strategies. Understanding these elements is crucial for developing sustainable approaches to community policing and improving public safety. Using a qualitative descriptive research design, in-depth interviews were conducted with 15 participants, including police officers, community members, and barangay officials. Thematic analysis was employed to explore participants' experiences and perspectives regarding community engagement practices and their influence on trust, cooperation, and mutual understanding between police and residents. Findings reveal that community engagement initiatives significantly build and reinforce trust, improve perceptions of safety, and facilitate positive police-community interactions. Key factors contributing to the effectiveness of these strategies include clear objectives, well-designed programs, active community involvement, collaborative partnerships with NGOs, and robust support from local government. Additionally, continuous feedback mechanisms and resource management were found essential for sustaining these initiatives. This study contributes valuable insights to the existing literature by highlighting the critical role of strategic planning and community collaboration in strengthening police-community relations. Practically, the findings underscore the importance of sustained, inclusive, and well-supported engagement efforts to foster long-term trust and cooperation, providing a model for similar urban communities seeking to enhance public safety and social cohesion.

Keywords. Community Engagement, Police-Community Relations, Trust-Building, Collaborative Strategies, Baguio City Policing

Introduction

In contemporary days, people are paying close attention to the complex relationships that exist between police enforcement and the communities they serve. There are observable patterns in the developing landscape of police-community relations that correspond to changes in public perspectives, expectations, and the role of law enforcement in fostering community well-being. These interactions are more complicated as a result of increasing calls for responsibility, technology improvements, and heightened awareness of social justice issues

(Tondo et al., 2020). Thus, the significance of proactive community engagement in fostering trust and bridging gaps is being acknowledged by law enforcement organizations progressively (LinkedIn, 2024). Further, relationships between the police and the community are being shaped by new factors. For instance, the impact of social media has opened up new possibilities for communication and can increase positive and negative interactions (Dias Kershaw, 2023). Community-oriented policing, a strategy gaining traction, involves law enforcement agencies collaborating with community members to identify and solve local problems (Tondo et al., 2020). This approach emphasizes building relationships and partnerships, recognizing community input as valuable.

The issues within police-community relationships extend beyond individual incidents and encompass complex societal challenges. The interactions between law enforcement and communities are influenced by a complex web of interconnected challenges, including income inequality, lack of education, and historical injustices (Skoczek, 2023). These challenges create a structural barrier that prevents collaboration and trust. Socioeconomic inequality, for instance, can make people feel underprivileged and excluded from communities, which contributes to tensions between the public and law enforcement (Schröder & Neumayr, 2023). Disparities in education may prevent clear communication and comprehension, making it more difficult to establish meaningful connections (Skoczek, 2023). Historical injustices, tightly established in societal systems, continue to have a major effect on current interactions, needing intentional efforts to acknowledge past traumas and achieve reconciliation (Varghese et al., 2019). Recognizing and navigating these challenges is essential for developing strategies that not only address immediate concerns but also contribute to the long-term transformation of police-community relationships.

Various existing strategies seek to bridge gaps and develop positive connections in the complex environment of police-community relationships. Problem-oriented policing, for example, focuses on identifying and treating the underlying causes of issues rather than simply responding to incidents (Hinkle et al., 2020). Another well-established strategy is Procedural Justice, which promotes fairness and transparency in law enforcement encounters, resulting in increased community trust (Cohen, & Headley, 2023). Additionally, Community policing, characterized by officers actively engaging with residents to collaboratively address local concerns, remains a cornerstone strategy (Menon, 2023). Therefore, recognizing the effectiveness and challenges of these existing strategies is essential for informing the ongoing discussions surrounding police-community relationships and guiding the development of future community engagement initiatives.

The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of the various experiences that community members have with different types of police engagement activities. The primary objective is to acquire an in-depth understanding of the various experiences and perspectives of respondents who are actively involved in various programs administered by the Philippine National Police (PNP). Through exploring each aspect of these experiences, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics that define interactions between the police and the community.

This study makes significant contributions by providing valuable insights into the varied experiences of community members during police engagement activities. The study aims to identify respondents' challenges through a detailed analysis of their experiences, providing a foundation to make particular recommendations. The main goal is to improve the effectiveness of police-community engagement initiatives by creating an environment of trust, transparency, and positive relationships between the PNP and the various communities that it serves.

Review of Related Literature

Community engagement plays a crucial role in enhancing police-community relationships by fostering a sense of trust, collaboration, and mutual understanding between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve. The study by Lockey et al. (2019) examined the impact of a community engagement intervention on people's fear of crime and perceptions of the police. The intervention aimed to enhance citizens' perceptions of social capital, improve their perceptions of the police, and reduce fear of crime and antisocial behavior. The study found that the intervention successfully achieved its objectives in the trial area, with significant increases in social capital, local area potency, confidence in the police, perceptions of police-community focus, and decreases in fear of crime and antisocial behavior. These findings contribute to the limited empirical evidence supporting the positive influence of community engagement on police-community relationships (Lockey et al., 2019).

In contrast, Haim et al. (2021) revealed that community policing intervention did not affect key outcomes of interest, including crime victimization, insecurity, citizen views of police, police abuse, or citizen participation with the police. These findings are consistent with other countries included in the Metaketa initiative, such as Brazil, Colombia, Liberia, Pakistan, and Uganda. The researchers conclude that community policing, as implemented in these contexts, does not deliver the expected benefits of reducing crime or improving citizen trust in the police. This suggests that community policing does not lead to a self-perpetuating cycle of citizen cooperation with police efforts to fight crime in the short term (Haim et al., 2021).

PowerDMS (2023) highlights the challenges faced by police officers, including low morale, burnout, and declining motivation, which can lead to early retirement or leaving the profession. The article emphasizes the importance of community engagement in addressing these issues and improving officer morale and retention. Factors contributing to low morale include public criticism, the high-risk nature of police work, increased workloads, and lack of recognition. The negative impact of low morale on the community is also discussed, as it hinders the ability of police departments to meet public safety expectations. Thus, the article proposes community engagement as a solution, emphasizing the need to build stronger relationships with the community, facilitate positive feedback, and help officers rediscover their sense of purpose (PowerDMS, 2023).

The study by Mutasa (2021) examined the effectiveness of the Joint Community-Police Partnership (JCPP) program focusing on police-community relationships. The results revealed several positive outcomes of the JCPP program. Firstly, participants reported an increase in police visibility, which contributed to a greater sense of safety and security within the community. Secondly, the program facilitated improved engagement in meaningful dialogue between police officers and community members, leading to better communication and understanding. Additionally, the JCPP strategies enhanced cultural awareness, fostering respect and sensitivity towards different cultures.

Furthermore, the program played a role in building community trust and garnering public support for crime prevention, safety initiatives, and transparency and accountability in law enforcement (Mutasa, 2021). Thus, Britton and Knight (2021) highlight the importance of participative policing models where community volunteers engage directly in policing activities, leading to enduring and integrated co-production relationships. This approach represents a transformative shift in the community-police relationship and aligns with key pillars of police reform, such as public engagement, trust, and legitimacy in policing. The study emphasizes the growing interest in police voluntarism, driven by evolving policing challenges,

severity measures, concepts of the broader "police family," and organizational development and workforce reform (Britton and Knight, 2021).

Mathura (2022) examines citizens' perceptions of the role and function of the police in a post-colonial society. The study reveals that the current position and part of police officers in the country closely align with the colonial model of policing, characterized by a paramilitary approach focused on law enforcement and public order duties. This model is seen as counterproductive for police-community relations and has been associated with discriminatory treatment of citizens based on their socioeconomic status. The study by Bonnan-White et al. (2022) investigates the factors influencing police officers' trust in community members, particularly in the context of officer-involved shooting (OIS) incidents. The finding revealed several significant results. Firstly, officers' trust levels, in general, and specifically regarding OIS incidents, vary significantly based on the reported frequency of on-the-job emotions, job satisfaction, department administration, and awareness of local culture. Thus, these factors significantly shape officers' trust in the community they police. These findings highlight the importance of considering the complexity of police-community relationships and their connection to supporting the mental wellness of police officers in their job-related contexts (Bonnan-White et al., 2022).

The study by Kearns (2018) stated that police officers perceive community policing as appropriate for addressing common crimes and terrorism. The findings suggest that community policing has potential in counterterrorism, aligning with the process-based regulation model and the belief held by police chiefs and scholars. Interestingly, the study revealed that department-level policy is not the primary driver of officer support for community policing. Instead, officers' own experiences with community policing and their general support for the practice influence their views on its effectiveness in countering terrorism (Kearns, 2018). On the other hand, Mokhomole and Olutola (2023) focus on the consequences of police-community relationships for crime reduction. Despite the challenging conditions faced by police officers, the community believes that it is the responsibility of the police to ensure a safer community with lower crime rates. However, the current crime reduction programs in the community area are ineffective, even with initiatives such as community policing forums, sector crime forums, "Take a Girl Child to Work," and "Adopt a Cop" implemented in specific community areas. The findings revealed several reasons for the high crime rate in the policing area. These include police corruption, inadequate communication between the police and the community, lack of community knowledge about the functions of the criminal justice system, and low morale within policing organizations. Thus, these factors contribute to a poor police-community relationship (Mokhomole & Olutola, 2023).

According to McCarthy et al. (2021), higher levels of community engagement were associated with a more significant endorsement of non-coercive policing responses and a lower endorsement of coercive policing responses among police officers. Moreover, the social distance was found to mediate the relationship between community engagement and the endorsement of non-coercive policing responses, suggesting that reducing the social distance to the community is one pathway through which community policing approaches can promote non-coercive policing. These results imply that community policing approaches can potentially increase the likelihood of non-coercive policing responses by police officers. By engaging with the community, reducing social distance, and fostering positive relationships, police agencies may be able to encourage officers to adopt non-coercive approaches in their interactions with the public (McCarthy et al., 2021). Yale University (2019) found that brief, friendly door-to-door visits by uniformed police officers significantly improved people's attitudes toward the

police and increased their trust in law enforcement. The positive effects of the encounters lasted even after 21 days, with residents continuing to report improved attitudes toward the police. The findings supported the promotion of community-oriented policing to construct trust between police officers and the communities they serve. The study showed that a positive, nonenforcement interaction with a police officer improved residents' attitudes toward the police, including perceived legitimacy and willingness to cooperate. The study concluded that community-oriented policing approaches, such as door-to-door visits, can significantly improve attitudes toward the police and increase trust in law enforcement (Yale University, 2019).

The study by Olson et al. (2022) highlights the importance of establishing effective partnerships between academic institutions, medical centers, and local police departments. It emphasizes the need for collaboration, accountability, and addressing key areas such as diversity, psychological evaluation, use of force, and communication to enhance the interconnection between the police and the community they serve (Olson et al., 2022). In addition, the findings of Nubani et al. (2023) emphasized that successful crime prevention should not solely rely on traditional policing approaches. However, they should also incorporate social programs and physical improvements to the built environment tailored to each city's specific needs, issues, and concerns. It underlines the need to move beyond over-policing and to involve community members in shaping policies and interventions that address the root causes of crime and promote community well-being (Nubani et al., 2023).

In support of the study above, Ali and Shepherd (2023) suggests the need for tailored approaches and identified sociocultural factors that must be considered by police when developing and implementing engagement initiatives. The study's results emphasized the importance of prioritizing the community's needs over intelligence gathering and suggested embedding employment and education services into engagement efforts. By addressing socioeconomic challenges and understanding the unique perspectives of the community, police can build trust and enhance their legitimacy in the community. Moreover, the findings by Ahmed and Kader (2023) revealed that the community participation process began with the formation of Community-Police Forums (CPFs) and extended to implementing crime prevention programs. Various police-community meetings were identified as facilitators for community involvement in crime prevention. However, the study highlighted that community participation in community policing was often limited and shaped by the police, leading to a stereotyped and policy-driven process. Thus, this study underscores the importance of understanding and improving the dynamics of community participation in community policing efforts to enhance police-community relationships (Ahmed & Kader, 2023).

Community engagement has emerged as a pivotal strategy for fostering positive police-community relationships, with various studies shedding light on its impact and effectiveness. Lockey et al. (2019) demonstrated the positive outcomes of community engagement interventions, showcasing significant improvements in social capital, perceptions of the police, and reductions in fear of crime and antisocial behavior. These findings underscore the potential of community engagement initiatives in enhancing trust and collaboration between law enforcement and communities. However, contrasting results were presented by Haim et al. (2021), suggesting that traditional community policing interventions may not consistently deliver desired outcomes, such as crime reduction or improved citizen trust in the police. This highlights the complexity and context-dependency of community policing approaches, emphasizing the need for nuanced strategies tailored to specific community needs and challenges.

Addressing the challenges faced by police officers, PowerDMS (2023) emphasized the role of community engagement in improving officer morale and retention. By fostering stronger relationships with the community and facilitating positive feedback, community engagement initiatives can help officers rediscover their sense of purpose and mitigate burnout. The effectiveness of joint community-police partnership programs was highlighted by Mutasa (2021), showing positive outcomes such as increased police visibility, improved communication, and enhanced community trust. Similarly, Britton and Knight (2021) emphasized the transformative potential of participative policing models, where community volunteers engage directly in policing activities, leading to enduring co-production relationships.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The theoretical framework for this study draws upon several key concepts from sociology, criminology, and community psychology to understand the dynamics of police-community relationships and the role of community engagement in shaping them. Social capital theory provides a foundational perspective, emphasizing the importance of trust, reciprocity, and social connections within communities. According to social capital theory, community engagement initiatives contribute to the accumulation of social capital by fostering positive interactions between residents and law enforcement agencies, thereby strengthening bonds and promoting collective efficacy in addressing crime and safety concerns (Lo et al., 2022).

Building upon social capital theory, the procedural justice framework offers insights into the importance of fair and respectful treatment by law enforcement in shaping perceptions of legitimacy and trust. Procedural justice theory posits that when individuals perceive police actions as fair, transparent, and respectful, they are more likely to comply with the law and cooperate with law enforcement efforts (Bradford et al., 2023). Community engagement initiatives can enhance procedural justice by providing opportunities for meaningful dialogue, collaborative problem-solving, and citizen participation in decision-making processes, thereby fostering positive perceptions of police legitimacy and trust.

Furthermore, ecological systems theory offers a lens through which to examine the complex interactions between individuals, communities, and institutional structures. This theory highlights the interconnectedness of various social systems and emphasizes the importance of considering multiple levels of influence, from individual beliefs and attitudes to community norms and institutional policies (Evans, 2024). The theory can investigate how community engagement initiatives function within larger social, cultural, and political contexts by incorporating ecological systems theory into the theoretical framework. This will help to clarify the complex factors influencing police-community relationships and assess the effectiveness of community engagement strategies in promoting positive outcomes.

Schematic Illustration of the Study

Rooted in social constructivism, this paradigm acknowledges the subjective realities and diverse perspectives of individuals within the studied context. The study seeks to explore and interpret the lived experiences, perceptions, and interactions of community members and law enforcement personnel, aiming to uncover underlying meanings, patterns, and relationships within the data.

Input factors include a comprehensive review of related literature, the formulation of research questions, and the identification of various community engagement strategies. The process involves data collection through semi-structured interviews with community members

and law enforcement personnel, as well as subsequent qualitative analysis techniques. Output comprises findings regarding the perceived impact of community engagement initiatives on enhancing police-community relationships, the effectiveness of different strategies in building stronger bonds, and the identification of factors contributing to their success. Ultimately, the study aims to provide insights into current practices and recommendations for the development of improved strategies to foster positive relationships and enhance collaboration between police and the community.

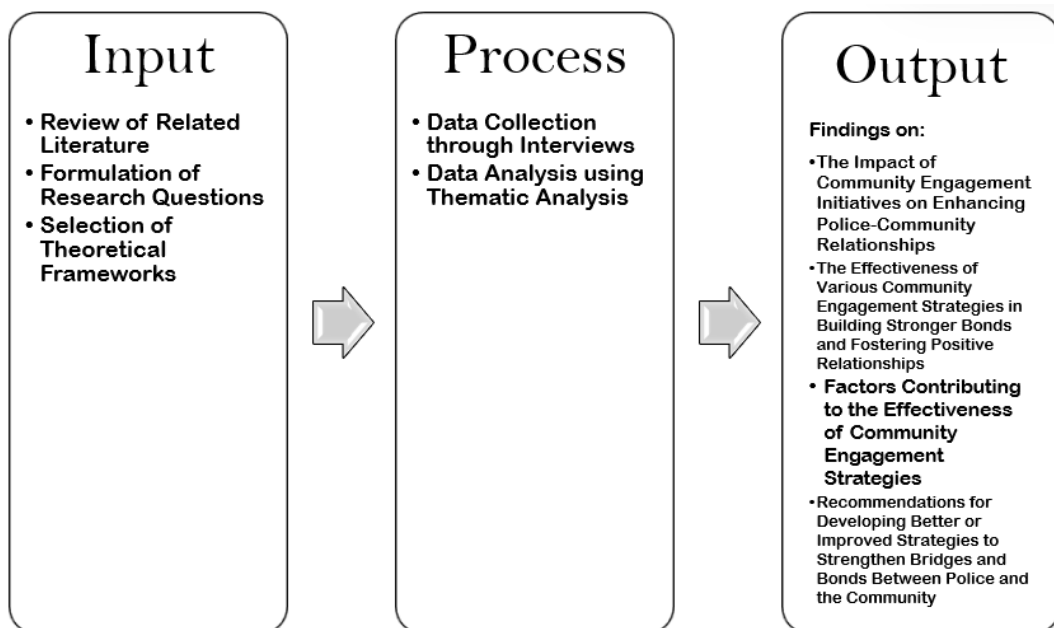


Figure 1: Schematic Illustration of the Study

Significance of the Study

This study investigates the effectiveness of community engagement initiatives in improving police-community relationships. By exploring the impact of various community engagement strategies, the study aims to provide valuable insights into the most effective approaches for building trust, promoting positive interactions, and reducing tensions between the police and the community. The study's findings will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on police-community relationships, inform policymaking, and guide the development of evidence-based strategies to foster trust, collaboration, and understanding. Ultimately, the study aims to create safer, more cohesive communities where both the police and community members feel respected, supported, and engaged in maintaining public safety.

Statement of the Problem

The main objective of this study is to explore the impact of community engagement on enhancing police-community relationships, specifically, it seeks to answer the following:

1. What are the effects/impacts of community engagement initiatives on enhancing police-community relationships in Baguio City?

2. What factors contribute to the effectiveness of community engagement strategies?

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to investigate the impact of community engagement on enhancing police-community relationships. In-depth interviews were conducted to explore various themes related to community members' experiences with police engagement activities. These themes encompassed community engagement practices, the dynamics of police-community relationships, trust-building processes, cooperation between the two entities, and barriers to effective engagement. Thematic analysis was used to explore and understand the lived experiences of community members regarding police engagement activities. This qualitative method focused on gaining an in-depth understanding of participants' subjective experiences, emphasizing their perspectives, meanings, and interpretations (Gil-Rodriguez, 2022). Ethical considerations, including informed consent and confidentiality, were rigorously followed throughout the research process. By examining the role of community engagement, the study aimed to contribute valuable insights into strategies that could strengthen and build bridges between the police and the community they served.

Sample Population

The study included 15 participants, divided into three categories: 5 police officers, 5 individuals from the community, and 5 barangay officials. Police officers, as key players in law enforcement, contributed insights into their perspectives and experiences in community engagement. Individuals from the community provided valuable information about their experiences, perceptions, and expectations of the police. Barangay officials from Governor Pack Road, Baguio City, serving as local government representatives, offered a unique perspective on community issues and collaborative efforts with the police. By involving these diverse participant groups, the study gained a comprehensive understanding of the impact of community engagement on enhancing police-community relationships in Baguio City, Philippines. Purposive sampling, a non-random sampling technique, was employed to intentionally select participants based on their residency in Baguio City, Philippines, and their status as Filipino citizens. This approach ensured that participants had firsthand experiences and insights about community engagement and police-community relationships in Baguio City, aligning with the study's specific focus.

Data Gathering Tool

The data gathering tool used in this study was an interview guide. This tool was crucial for achieving the study's objectives as it allowed the researcher to collect in-depth qualitative data from participants. By using an interview guide, the researcher was able to explore the effects and impacts of community engagement initiatives on police-community relationships in Baguio City. The predefined questions ensured that all relevant aspects were covered consistently across interviews, enabling a comprehensive analysis of how these initiatives influenced relationships.

Furthermore, the flexibility of the interview guide permitted the researcher to delve into specific factors that contributed to the effectiveness of community engagement strategies. Thus, participants, including police officers, individuals from the community, and barangay

officials, were provided with a list of different community engagement strategies. During the interviews, participants were encouraged to share their perspectives on the effectiveness of these strategies, providing in-depth insights and reflections. Rather than numerical ratings, the qualitative method involved open-ended discussions to explore the reasons behind participants' perceptions. This approach aimed to capture the depth and complexity of participants' views, contributing to a comprehensive qualitative analysis of the strategies and their impact on police-community relationships.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data-gathering procedure for this study began with obtaining the necessary approvals from relevant authorities through formal letters. Following this, the research instruments, including the interview guide, were validated to ensure their reliability and relevance to the study's objectives. The interview was conducted in a secure and comfortable place in Baguio City. Thus, the study involved conducting qualitative semi-structured interviews with three key participant groups: police officers, individuals from the community, and barangay officials. Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure diverse representation based on demographics and geographical locations within Baguio City. After securing informed consent, individual interviews were conducted using the validated interview guide, which was designed to explore themes such as community engagement practices, police-community dynamics, trust-building processes, cooperation, and barriers to effective engagement. The interviews were audio-recorded, and the transcriptions underwent thematic analysis to identify patterns, categories, and significant insights. Throughout the process, ethical considerations, including participant confidentiality and privacy, were strictly maintained. The resulting qualitative data was integrated into a comprehensive report, providing a better understanding of the impact of community engagement on police-community relationships in Baguio City.

Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations were important in this study and were adhered to throughout the research process. In compliance with Republic Act No. 10173, the Data Privacy Act of 2012, stringent measures were implemented to safeguard the confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Participants were thoroughly informed about the study's purpose and procedures, emphasizing their voluntary participation and their right to withdraw at any point without any repercussions. Anonymity was respected, and participants who opted for non-disclosure of identity were assured that their identities would remain confidential. Likewise, any information provided was treated with strict confidentiality, ensuring that only aggregated data was used in the reporting of findings.

The well-being of participants was prioritized, with careful attention to handling their experiences with sensitivity and empathy. The study's adherence to ethical guidelines ensured integrity, transparency, and respect in all interactions. Furthermore, a structured plan was developed to disseminate the findings of the study back to the community and participants. This included providing a summary of the results to all participants and sharing the findings with community leaders and stakeholders to ensure that the insights gained could contribute to meaningful improvements in police-community relationships.

Results and Discussion

This section delves into the findings from the study, offering a detailed examination of how community engagement initiatives influence police-community relationships in Baguio City.

Effects/Impacts of Community Engagement Initiatives on Enhancing Police-Community Relationships in Baguio City

From the interviews conducted by the researcher, after thorough analysis, several key effects of community engagement initiatives on enhancing police-community relationships in Baguio City were identified. These findings highlight the crucial role that such initiatives play in fostering trust, cooperation, and mutual understanding between the police and the community. The detailed perspectives of participants provided an understanding of how community engagement impacts these relationships, shedding light on both the successes and challenges faced in building stronger connections between law enforcement and the public.

Building and Reinforcing Trust

This theme explores how community engagement initiatives contribute to building trust between the police and the community, focusing on both the initial establishment of trust and its reinforcement over time. Regular interaction with the community, such as through patrols and presence at local events, aims to foster a sense of familiarity and reliability. Feedback mechanisms allow residents to voice their concerns and suggestions, strengthening the relationship between the police and the community. These efforts are crucial in addressing the community's needs and improving their perception of safety. By actively engaging with residents, the police can build a foundation of trust and cooperation, essential for effective law enforcement. This theme highlights the importance of consistent and meaningful police presence in enhancing community trust and security.

Trust Building

The regular presence of police officers in the community is a critical factor in building trust. Police patrols and visible police outposts are designed to enhance the sense of security among residents (Blesse & Diegmann, 2022). One participant highlighted, "Frequent patrols and visible police presence make us feel safer and more connected to the police." This sentiment reflects the broader community's perception that increased visibility of police fosters a stronger sense of safety and trust.

The feedback from residents on police efforts and reliability plays a significant role in trust building. Community members who participate in barangay meetings and outreach programs often provide insights into their perceptions of the police. Another participant remarked, "Community feedback is important; when the police listen and respond to our concerns, it strengthens our trust in them." This feedback is significant in understanding and improving the police-community relationship, indicating that residents feel their feedback is valued and contributes to enhanced trust in the police. To support these findings, the study by Modise (2023) found that regular community engagement by police significantly increases community trust and cooperation.

Sense of Security

Community engagement initiatives, such as regular patrols and outreach programs, can alter the community's perception of safety. Increased police visibility and proactive engagement

are associated with changes in how residents perceive crime and safety (Nubani et al., 2023). A participant noted, “The increased police presence has made me feel that crime is less of a threat in my area.” This suggests that residents feel more secure due to these initiatives, highlighting the effectiveness of visible police activities in improving the sense of security.

Police initiatives are also aimed at reducing the fear of crime among residents. By providing a consistent police presence and engaging in community support activities, the police help alleviate anxieties related to crime. Another participant observed, “Knowing that the police are actively involved in our community reduces my fear of becoming a victim of crime.” This indicates that such initiatives are effective in mitigating community fears, contributing to a more relaxed and secure community environment. To support this finding, Yesberg et al. (2021) show that increased police visibility and community engagement significantly reduce the fear of crime among residents.

Thus, this theme outlines how community engagement initiatives impact the community's perception of safety and trust in the police, supported by qualitative insights from the study's participants.

Facilitating Positive Police-Community Interactions

This theme examines the impact of community engagement on the nature and quality of interactions between the police and community members, highlighting how these initiatives influence everyday encounters and communication. Effective engagement through various programs, patrols, and educational initiatives can significantly improve relationships and foster cooperation. The interaction between the police and community members during regular meetings, outreach programs, and patrols helps build a collaborative environment. Training sessions and youth programs further enhance these relationships by involving different segments of the community. These programs aim to establish a cooperative and supportive environment between the police and the community by promoting pleasant interaction and addressing to community needs.

Engagement Outcomes

The effectiveness of barangay meetings and community outreach programs in influencing police-community relationships is evident from participant feedback. Regular meetings provide a platform for open dialogue and understanding between the police and community members (TheFernandezFirm, 2023). One community member shared, “Barangay meetings allow us to voice our concerns directly to the police, making us feel heard and respected.” A police officer echoed this statement, stating, “Our regular meetings with community members help us understand their concerns better and work collaboratively towards solutions.” This engagement fosters a sense of collaboration and mutual respect, essential for improving police-community relations.

Police patrols and the strategic placement of outposts play a significant role in fostering community relations. These activities not only enhance visibility but also provide opportunities for positive interactions between police officers and residents. A community leader remarked, “Regular patrols and accessible outposts make the police more approachable and integrated into our community.” A police officer supported this by saying, “Being present in the community through patrols allows us to build trust and rapport with the residents.” This sentiment highlights how such initiatives help build stronger and more positive relationships between the police and the community. To support these findings, a study by Ekici et al. (2022) indicates that consistent

police-community meetings and visible patrols significantly enhance mutual understanding and cooperation.

Training and Youth Programs

Educational initiatives, including seminars and training sessions, significantly impact community-police interactions. These programs often cover important topics like crime prevention and self-defense, providing valuable knowledge to the community. A community member noted, “The seminars on crime prevention have made us more aware of safety measures and improved our interaction with the police.” A barangay tanod added, “Training sessions on self-defense and crime prevention help us work more effectively with the police.” This suggests that educational initiatives help bridge the gap between the police and the community by providing useful information and fostering dialogue.

Youth programs, such as sports and anti-drug campaigns, play a crucial role in improving relationships between the police and younger community members. Involving youth in these activities helps build trust and cooperation from an early age. A youth participant commented, “The sports programs organized by the police have engaged many young people and created a positive image of the police among the youth.” A police officer involved in these programs said, “Working with the youth through sports and other activities helps us build positive relationships and prevent crime.” This involvement demonstrates how targeted programs can effectively enhance police-community interactions and build lasting relationships. To support this, an article by McKenzie (2021) shows that community-focused educational and youth programs are highly effective in fostering positive police-community interactions.

This theme emphasizes the influence of community engagement initiatives on police-community interactions, drawing on qualitative insights from the study's participants.

Long-Term Relationship Dynamics

This theme addresses the long-term effects of community engagement, particularly how it fosters sustained relationships and ongoing collaboration between the police and the community. Ongoing efforts in community engagement, including trust-building activities and recognition of successful strategies, play a crucial role in shaping long-term dynamics. By consistently fostering positive interactions and addressing community needs, these initiatives contribute to the development of a lasting and mutually beneficial relationship between the police and the residents. The focus on long-term trust and the creation of model communities underscores the importance of sustained engagement in achieving lasting improvements in police-community relations.

Sustained Trust

Sustained trust between the police and the community is a fundamental outcome of effective engagement strategies. Ongoing interactions through regular meetings, outreach programs, and consistent visibility contribute to the development and maintenance of trust over time. One community member observed that “consistent engagement with the police has built a sense of reliability and trust, which is important for effective community policing.” Similarly, a police officer noted, “Building long-term trust requires continuous and genuine interactions with the community, which helps to bridge gaps and resolve conflicts.” This sustained trust is essential for fostering a cooperative and supportive environment that benefits both the police and the community.

Examples of successful trust-building efforts provide insight into effective practices. Successful programs often involve collaborative problem-solving and responsiveness to community concerns. For instance, a community leader highlighted, “The police’s proactive approach in addressing community issues has led to a stronger bond and greater trust between us.” These examples demonstrate that sustained engagement and a commitment to addressing community needs are key to maintaining trust and fostering long-term cooperation. Modise (2023) highlights the importance of consistent engagement and responsiveness in building and maintaining trust between law enforcement and the community.

Model Community

Baguio City’s strategies for community engagement have garnered recognition as effective models for other communities. Successful initiatives in Baguio City, such as collaborative programs and consistent outreach efforts, serve as examples of best practices that can be replicated in other areas. A local official remarked, “Our community engagement strategies have been recognized for their effectiveness, and we are often approached by other cities looking to implement similar programs.” This recognition highlights the successful application of engagement strategies and their potential for broader impact.

Furthermore, the sharing of best practices from Baguio City provides valuable insights for other communities aiming to improve their police-community relationships. By showcasing successful strategies and outcomes, Baguio City contributes to the development of effective engagement models that can be adapted and implemented in different contexts. A police officer noted, “Our experience in Baguio City has demonstrated that engaging with the community in meaningful ways can create positive changes, and we are proud to share these practices with others.” According to Mangai et al. (2023), communities that share successful engagement strategies contribute to the broader development of effective policing models and improve overall community relations.

This theme emphasizes how ongoing engagement efforts and successful practices in Baguio City contribute to long-term improvements in police-community relationships, supported by qualitative insights and examples of effective strategies.

Factors Contributing to the Effectiveness of Community Engagement Strategies

From the interviews conducted by the researcher, after thorough analysis, several key factors contributing to the effectiveness of community engagement strategies in enhancing police-community relationships in Baguio City were identified. These findings emphasize the importance of strategic planning, active participation, and robust support systems in the success of these initiatives. The detailed insights from participants revealed how well-defined objectives, collaborative efforts, and sustained support from various stakeholders play critical roles in ensuring that community engagement efforts are both impactful and sustainable. The analysis also uncovered the challenges and opportunities in optimizing these factors to strengthen the bond between the police and the community.

Effectiveness of Engagement Strategies

This theme delves into how effective strategic planning and implementation of community engagement initiatives influence their overall success. It examines the alignment of objectives, the design of programs, and how these elements contribute to the effectiveness of engagement strategies. This section shows that effective engagement is largely driven by clear objectives, well-designed programs, and active community involvement. A well-structured

approach to planning and execution ensures that initiatives address community needs and align with broader goals. By examining how strategic planning and program design influence the effectiveness of community engagement, this theme provides insights into best practices and the factors that support successful engagement efforts.

Objectives and Goals

The clarity of objectives and goals plays a pivotal role in the success of community engagement strategies. Clear and well-defined objectives guide the planning and implementation of initiatives, ensuring that they effectively address community needs. One community member highlighted, “Having clear goals for our programs helps everyone understand their role and the overall purpose, which leads to more effective outcomes.” This sentiment is echoed by a police officer who stated, “When we set specific, achievable objectives, it becomes easier to measure progress and make necessary adjustments.” Such clarity enables focused efforts and provides a framework for evaluating the impact of engagement strategies.

Community involvement in shaping and implementing strategies further enhances effectiveness. Engaging residents in the planning process ensures that programs are tailored to their needs and preferences. A community leader noted, “Involving community members in the planning stages allows us to create programs that are more relevant and impactful.” This collaborative approach not only improves the relevance of the initiatives but also fosters a sense of ownership and commitment among community members. An article by Jambo (2023) emphasizes that clear objectives and active community involvement are crucial for the successful implementation of engagement strategies.

Program Design

The design and execution of community outreach programs, such as medical missions and feeding programs, are essential components of effective engagement strategies. Well-designed programs that address specific community needs contribute to the overall success of engagement efforts. A police officer remarked, “Designing outreach programs that directly address community needs helps build trust and demonstrates our commitment to their well-being.” This approach ensures that the initiatives have a tangible impact and foster positive relationships between the police and the community.

Patrol strategies and the placement of police outposts also play a significant role in the effectiveness of community engagement. Strategic patrols and accessible outposts enhance police visibility and accessibility, which helps build rapport with residents. A community member stated, “Having police outposts in key areas makes it easier for us to interact with officers and feel more secure.” This visibility fosters a sense of safety and encourages positive interactions between police officers and the community. According to Signori et al. (2022), effective program design and strategic placement of police resources are key factors in enhancing community engagement and building stronger relationships.

This theme highlights the importance of clear objectives and well-designed programs in driving the effectiveness of community engagement strategies, supported by qualitative insights of the participants.

Collaborative Efforts and Stakeholder Involvement

This theme focuses on the role of active participation and collaboration in community engagement efforts. It delves on how involving community members and stakeholders, along

with utilizing feedback mechanisms, enhances the effectiveness and impact of the initiatives. Effective engagement strategies rely on high levels of community involvement and collaborative efforts with external partners, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civic groups. By fostering participation and leveraging collaborative partnerships, these strategies can address community needs more effectively and ensure sustained impact. This theme highlights the significance of active involvement and partnerships in enhancing the overall effectiveness of engagement initiatives.

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

The degree of community involvement plays a crucial role in the success of engagement strategies. When community members are actively involved in planning and executing initiatives, the programs are more likely to address their specific needs and gain their support. One community member shared, “When we are involved in the planning process, the programs feel more relevant and impactful, as they address our actual concerns.” This sentiment is echoed by a police officer who noted, “Involving the community in our initiatives ensures that we are meeting their needs and building stronger relationships.”

Collaboration with NGOs and civic groups further enhances the effectiveness of community engagement strategies. These organizations often bring additional resources, expertise, and networks that can amplify the impact of police initiatives. A police officer commented, “Partnering with NGOs helps us extend our reach and provide more comprehensive support to the community.” Thus, such collaborations leverage the strengths of different organizations to achieve common goals and enhance overall engagement. Abiddin et al. (2021) highlight that active community participation and strategic partnerships with NGOs are vital for developing effective and sustainable community engagement strategies.

Feedback Mechanisms

The integration of community feedback into engagement strategies is essential for their continuous improvement and effectiveness. Collecting feedback from residents allows for the adjustment of programs based on their experiences and needs. A community member noted, “Providing feedback on the programs makes us feel heard and ensures that changes are made to improve them.” A police officer added, “Regular feedback helps us understand what’s working and what needs adjustment, making our strategies more effective.”

Ongoing assessment and refinement of strategies based on feedback contribute to their sustained success. By regularly evaluating the effectiveness of programs and making necessary improvements, police and community partners can ensure that engagement strategies remain relevant and impactful. A local leader observed, “Continuous improvement based on feedback ensures that the programs evolve to meet the changing needs of the community.” This approach fosters a dynamic and responsive engagement strategy that adapts to the needs of the community over time. According to IACP (n.d.), the incorporation of community feedback and continuous assessment is key to enhancing the effectiveness and adaptability of engagement strategies.

This theme emphasizes the importance of active participation, collaboration, and feedback mechanisms in optimizing community engagement strategies, with supporting insights from participants and relevant research.

Support Structures and Resource Management

This theme explores the importance of support systems, including government and NGO support, as well as the management of resources and sustainability. It examines how these

factors contribute to the successful execution and long-term viability of community engagement strategies. Effective support from local government and NGOs provides the necessary resources and backing for the successful implementation of engagement initiatives. Additionally, adequate resource allocation and strategic planning are essential for sustaining these efforts over the long term. This theme underscores the importance of support structures in maintaining and enhancing community engagement activities.

Government and NGO Support

The involvement of local government plays a crucial role in supporting community engagement initiatives. Government support can include funding, policy backing, and logistical assistance, all of which are vital for the successful execution of engagement strategies. A community leader noted, “The local government’s financial support and policy backing are essential for running effective community programs.” Similarly, a police officer highlighted, “Government assistance provides the necessary resources and legitimacy to our initiatives, enabling us to reach more people and have a greater impact.”

NGOs also contribute significantly by offering additional resources, expertise, and networks that enhance engagement efforts. Their involvement often brings innovative approaches and expanded reach to community programs. A police officer stated, “Partnerships with NGOs help us access new tools and ideas that improve our engagement with the community.” This collaborative approach maximizes the effectiveness of community initiatives by combining various resources and strengths. According to Smith and Brown (2023), strong support from local government and NGOs is critical for the successful implementation and sustainability of community engagement programs. According to Abiddin et al. (2021), strong support from local government and NGOs is critical for the successful implementation and sustainability of community engagement programs.

Resource Allocation and Sustainability

Effective resource allocation is essential for the success and longevity of community engagement initiatives. Adequate funding and resource management ensure that programs can be maintained and scaled as needed. A police officer emphasized, “Proper allocation of resources allows us to execute our programs efficiently and sustain them over time.” A community member added, “Ensuring that there are sufficient resources available helps keep the programs running smoothly and effectively.”

Sustainability strategies are also crucial for the long-term success of engagement efforts. Developing plans for continued funding and support ensures that initiatives do not falter over time. A local leader stated, “Having a clear sustainability plan helps us ensure that our programs continue to benefit the community in the long run.” This approach includes securing ongoing financial support and developing partnerships that can provide continued assistance. Nubani et al. (2023) highlight that strategic resource allocation and sustainability planning are key to the continued success and impact of community engagement initiatives.

This theme highlights the importance of support systems, including government and NGO contributions, as well as effective resource allocation and sustainability planning, in enhancing the effectiveness and longevity of community engagement strategies.

Conclusions

The study provides valuable insights into the effects of community engagement initiatives on police-community relationships in Baguio City. It highlights the importance of

consistent police presence and active engagement in building trust and improving safety perceptions. Regular patrols and visible police outposts contribute significantly to enhancing residents' sense of security, while feedback mechanisms, such as barangay meetings, allow the community to express concerns and feel heard. This active interaction between the police and the community fosters a positive relationship, crucial for effective law enforcement and improved public perception.

The research underscores how various community engagement strategies, including regular meetings, outreach programs, and educational initiatives, positively impact police-community interactions. These activities create opportunities for open dialogue and mutual understanding, which are essential for building rapport and addressing community needs. Educational programs and youth initiatives further strengthen these relationships by involving different segments of the community, thereby enhancing cooperation and collaboration between police officers and residents.

Sustained trust and successful relationship-building are key outcomes of ongoing community engagement efforts. The study reveals that consistent interactions and responsiveness to community needs contribute to long-term trust and cooperation. Baguio City's effective engagement strategies, recognized as models for other communities, emphasize the importance of enduring engagement and proactive problem-solving in maintaining positive police-community relationships.

Finally, the study highlights the critical role of support systems, including government and NGO contributions, in ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of community engagement strategies. Government support provides essential resources and policy backing, while NGOs offer additional expertise and networks. Effective resource allocation and sustainability planning are crucial for maintaining and scaling engagement efforts over time. These findings illustrate that robust support structures are vital for enhancing the longevity and impact of community engagement initiatives, ultimately leading to improved police-community relations.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be made to further enhance community engagement initiatives and strengthen police-community relationships in Baguio City.

1. **Enhance Police Visibility and Engagement:** Police officers should continue and expand their efforts in maintaining a regular and visible presence within the community. This includes increasing the frequency of patrols and strategically placing police outposts in key areas. Such actions will bolster residents' sense of security and facilitate more frequent interactions between the police and the community. Local government officials and police department leaders should prioritize and allocate resources to support these visibility efforts.

2. **Strengthen Community Feedback Mechanisms:** It is crucial to enhance feedback mechanisms such as barangay meetings and community outreach programs. These platforms should be used to actively solicit and address community concerns and suggestions. Regular feedback sessions should be scheduled to ensure that residents feel their voices are heard and valued. Community leaders and local government officials are responsible for organizing and facilitating these sessions, while the police should ensure timely and effective responses to feedback received.

3. **Expand Educational and Youth Programs:** To build stronger relationships, it is recommended to broaden the scope of educational and youth engagement programs. These

programs should include a wider range of topics relevant to community safety and crime prevention and involve more youth-focused activities. Educational institutions and community organizations can play a vital role in collaborating with the police to design and implement these programs. Police officers should actively participate in and support these initiatives to maximize their impact.

4. **Promote Sustainable Support Systems:** Ensure that community engagement initiatives are supported by robust resource allocation and sustainability planning. This involves securing adequate funding and resources from both government and non-governmental organizations. Local government officials should advocate for increased financial support and policy backing, while NGOs should continue to offer their expertise and resources. Collaboration between these entities will be crucial in maintaining the effectiveness and longevity of community engagement efforts.

By implementing these recommendations, responsible individuals and beneficiaries—such as police officers, local government officials, community leaders, and NGOs—can work together to enhance community engagement strategies and further improve police-community relationships in Baguio City.

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Appendices

Appendix A

CONSENT FORM

Dear respondents:

Please read the following before signing the assent form:

Primary Investigator: Kimberly A. Blanco

INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION: University of Baguio

NAME OF PROJECT: Building Bridges and Strengthening Bonds: Exploring the Impact of Community Engagement on Enhancing Police-Community Relationships

INTRODUCTION: You are invited to participate in a research study on the Building Bridges and Strengthening Bonds: Exploring the Impact of Community Engagement on Enhancing Police-Community Relationships. You will be asked to answer a questionnaire that takes about 5-10 minutes. Indicating your names will be optional, but a tracking number is placed in each questionnaire. You don't have to decide today whether or not you will participate in the research. For any questions or concerns regarding this research, please feel free to contact the researcher Kimberly A. Blanco, 09350790431.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH: The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of the various experiences that community members have with different types of police engagement activities. The primary objective is to acquire an in-depth understanding of the various experiences and perspectives of respondents who are actively involved in various programs administered by the Philippine National Police (PNP).

TYPE OF THE RESEARCH INTERVENTION: In this study, participants will be invited to take part in semi-structured interviews focusing on their perspectives and experiences with community engagement initiatives aimed at strengthening police-community relationships. The interviews will explore themes such as awareness of these initiatives, their perceived effectiveness, factors contributing to their success or challenges, and suggestions for improvement. Each interview is expected to last approximately 30-45 minutes.

PARTICIPANT SELECTION: You are invited to participate in this study if you are an active-duty police officer with a minimum of one year of service or a key official involved in designing and overseeing community engagement programs for police officers in Baguio City.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION: If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this project, please understand that your participation is voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. The results of this research study may be presented at scientific or professional meetings or published in scientific journals. However, your identity will not be disclosed.

PROCEDURES:

A. The researchers are seeking your assistance in providing valuable insights into the perceptions and experiences related to community engagement initiatives aimed at enhancing police-community relationships in Baguio City.

B. You will be asked to participate in a semi-structured interview, during which the researchers will guide the discussion and record your responses. If there are questions you prefer not to answer, you may skip them, and the researchers will respect your decision. All information shared during the interview will be kept confidential, and your identity will remain

anonymous. Only the researchers will have access to the interview recordings and transcripts, and your participation will be identified by a unique identifier rather than your name.

RISK OR DISCOMFORTS OF PARTICIPATING: Participating in this interview has no foreseeable risks. The benefit which may reasonably be expected to result from this interview is the _____. Your decision of whether or not to participate in this study will also not affect your study.

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING: Participation in this study offers an opportunity for respondents to contribute to the enhancement of community engagement initiatives aimed at strengthening police-community relationships in Baguio City. By sharing their experiences and perspectives, respondents can help identify effective strategies and areas for improvement in community engagement efforts. Additionally, respondents may gain insights into their perceptions and interactions with law enforcement, fostering a deeper understanding of community-police dynamics and potentially leading to enhanced collaboration and trust within their community.

TIME INVOLVEMENT: Your participation in the questionnaire will take approximately (30-45 minutes.)

PAYMENTS: You will not receive any monetary compensation for your participation, but your involvement will significantly contribute to our understanding of the effectiveness and challenges of community engagement initiatives aimed at enhancing police-community relationships in Baguio City.

CONFIDENTIALITY: We assure you that the data I will be getting from you will remain confidential. Any individual information will be kept secret unless otherwise specified by the respondent.

ANONYMITY: Please be assured that your identity will remain anonymous. I will not be using your name in any of the documents I will be getting from you; instead, I will give a number code representing you.

SHARING THE RESULTS: Nothing indicated in the questionnaires will be shared with anybody outside the research team, and nothing will be attributed to you by name. The data that we will gather from this research will be shared with you. Each participant will receive a summary of the results.

RIGHT TO REFUSE OR WITHDRAW: Participating in this research is at your discretion. You may stop taking part in the completion of the questionnaire any time that you wish. You have the right to withdraw from participating anytime you feel uncomfortable.

WHO TO CONTACT: Kimberly A. Blanco

CONTACT INFORMATION: 09350790431

Questions, Concerns, or Complaints: If you have any questions, concerns, or complaints about this research study, its procedures, risks, and benefits, you should ask the Research Promoters, Kimberly A. Blanco. You may contact them now or later at 09350790431.

This proposal has been reviewed and approved by the University of Baguio's Research Ethics Committee, which is a committee whose task is to make sure that research participants are protected from harm. If you wish to find out more about the University of Baguio – Research Ethics Committee, contact Dr. Donnavila Marie B. Panday, Director for RIECO, at 442-4915 loc 232 or email at rdc@e.ubaguio.edu

CERTIFICATE OF CONSENT

I have been invited to participate in a study about “Building Bridges and Strengthening Bonds: Exploring the Impact of Community Engagement on Enhancing Police-Community Relationships”. I have read the preceding information, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions. I have been asked and have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study.

Print Name of Participant: _____

Signature of Participant: _____

Date: _____

Day/Month/Year

I have read and fully understood the information above and hereby allow my child ____ - _____, to participate in this study.

Name of parent: _____

Signature of Participant: _____

Date: _____

Day/Month/Year

STATEMENT BY THE RESEARCHER/PERSON TAKING CONSENT

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participants and, to the best of my ability, made sure that the participant fully understands what s/he is being asked to do in the research project.

I confirm that the participant was allowed to ask questions about the study, and all questions have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

A copy of this ICF has been provided to the participants.

Print Name of Researcher/person taking the consent: _____

Signature of Researcher/person taking the consent: _____

Date: _____

Day/Month/Year

Appendix B

Interview Guide

1. What specific community engagement initiatives have been implemented by the police in Baguio City?

2. How have the community engagement initiatives influenced community perceptions of the police?

3. What long-term impacts have community engagement initiatives had on the overall relationship between the police and the community in Baguio City?

4. What challenges do the police encounter in their community engagement initiatives to enhance police-community relationships?

5. As a police officer do you have the initiative to engage more often with your community?

6. What are the effects of community policing initiatives on police-community relations

7. What are the positive impacts of community engagement initiatives on enhancing police-community relationships?

8. Do these impacts greatly affect your relationship in the community as a police officer?

9. What factors contribute to the effectiveness of community engagement strategies in fostering positive outcomes?

10. What are the strategies used for the effectiveness of community engagement?

11. How can you be an effective police-community relation officer?

12. How did these factors contribute to the effectiveness of community engagement strategies?

13. Do these community engagement strategies help your relationship in the community as a police officer?

14. Are you willing to support the community to increase engagement and build good relationships?

Appendix C **Informed Consent**

August 12, 2024

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter to share the findings of the study in which you graciously participated. Your participation has been invaluable to me, and I sincerely appreciate your contribution.

The study explores the Impact of Community Engagement on Enhancing Police-Community Relationships.

I am pleased to inform you that the study has been successfully completed, and the results have been validated. We are now seeking your confirmation and agreement regarding the findings. We kindly request your signature on the attached document to confirm your agreement with the study results.

Results and Discussion

This section delves into the findings from the study, offering a detailed examination of how community engagement initiatives influence police-community relationships in Baguio City.

Effects/Impacts of Community Engagement Initiatives on Enhancing Police-Community Relationships in Baguio City

From the interviews conducted by the researcher, after thorough analysis, several key effects of community engagement initiatives on enhancing police-community relationships in Baguio City were identified. These findings highlight the crucial role that such initiatives play in fostering trust, cooperation, and mutual understanding between the police and the community. The detailed perspectives of participants provided an understanding of how community engagement impacts these relationships, shedding light on both the successes and challenges faced in building stronger connections between law enforcement and the public.

Building and Reinforcing Trust

This theme explores how community engagement initiatives contribute to building trust between the police and the community, focusing on both the initial establishment of trust and its reinforcement over time. Regular interaction with the community, such as through patrols and presence at local events, aims to foster a sense of familiarity and reliability. Feedback mechanisms allow residents to voice their concerns and suggestions, strengthening the relationship between the police and the community. These efforts are crucial in addressing the community's needs and improving their perception of safety. By actively engaging with residents, the police can build a foundation of trust and cooperation, essential for effective law enforcement. This theme highlights the importance of consistent and meaningful police presence in enhancing community trust and security.

Trust Building

The regular presence of police officers in the community is a critical factor in building trust. Police patrols and visible police outposts are designed to enhance the sense of security among residents (Blesse & Diegmann, 2022). One participant highlighted, "Frequent patrols and visible police presence make us feel safer and more connected to the police." This sentiment

reflects the broader community's perception that increased visibility of police fosters a stronger sense of safety and trust.

The feedback from residents on police efforts and reliability plays a significant role in trust building. Community members who participate in barangay meetings and outreach programs often provide insights into their perceptions of the police. Another participant remarked, "Community feedback is important; when the police listen and respond to our concerns, it strengthens our trust in them." This feedback is significant in understanding and improving the police-community relationship, indicating that residents feel their feedback is valued and contributes to enhanced trust in the police. To support these findings, the study by Modise (2023) found that regular community engagement by police significantly increases community trust and cooperation.

Sense of Security

Community engagement initiatives, such as regular patrols and outreach programs, can alter the community's perception of safety. Increased police visibility and proactive engagement are associated with changes in how residents perceive crime and safety (Nubani et al., 2023). A participant noted, "The increased police presence has made me feel that crime is less of a threat in my area." This suggests that residents feel more secure due to these initiatives, highlighting the effectiveness of visible police activities in improving the sense of security.

Police initiatives are also aimed at reducing the fear of crime among residents. By providing a consistent police presence and engaging in community support activities, the police help alleviate anxieties related to crime. Another participant observed, "Knowing that the police are actively involved in our community reduces my fear of becoming a victim of crime." This indicates that such initiatives are effective in mitigating community fears, contributing to a more relaxed and secure community environment. To support this finding, Yesberg et al. (2021) show that increased police visibility and community engagement significantly reduce the fear of crime among residents.

Thus, this theme outlines how community engagement initiatives impact the community's perception of safety and trust in the police, supported by qualitative insights from the study's participants.

Facilitating Positive Police-Community Interactions

This theme examines the impact of community engagement on the nature and quality of interactions between the police and community members, highlighting how these initiatives influence everyday encounters and communication. Effective engagement through various programs, patrols, and educational initiatives can significantly improve relationships and foster cooperation. The interaction between the police and community members during regular meetings, outreach programs, and patrols helps build a collaborative environment. Training sessions and youth programs further enhance these relationships by involving different segments of the community. These programs aim to establish a cooperative and supportive environment between the police and the community by promoting pleasant interaction and addressing to community needs.

Engagement Outcomes

The effectiveness of barangay meetings and community outreach programs in influencing police-community relationships is evident from participant feedback. Regular meetings provide a platform for open dialogue and understanding between the police and community members (TheFernandezFirm, 2023). One community member shared, "Barangay meetings allow us to voice our concerns directly to the police, making us feel heard and respected." A police officer echoed this statement, stating, "Our regular meetings with

community members help us understand their concerns better and work collaboratively towards solutions.” This engagement fosters a sense of collaboration and mutual respect, essential for improving police-community relations.

Police patrols and the strategic placement of outposts play a significant role in fostering community relations. These activities not only enhance visibility but also provide opportunities for positive interactions between police officers and residents. A community leader remarked, “Regular patrols and accessible outposts make the police more approachable and integrated into our community.” A police officer supported this by saying, “Being present in the community through patrols allows us to build trust and rapport with the residents.” This sentiment highlights how such initiatives help build stronger and more positive relationships between the police and the community. To support these findings, a study by Ekici et al. (2022) indicates that consistent police-community meetings and visible patrols significantly enhance mutual understanding and cooperation.

Training and Youth Programs

Educational initiatives, including seminars and training sessions, significantly impact community-police interactions. These programs often cover important topics like crime prevention and self-defense, providing valuable knowledge to the community. A community member noted, “The seminars on crime prevention have made us more aware of safety measures and improved our interaction with the police.” A barangay tanod added, “Training sessions on self-defense and crime prevention help us work more effectively with the police.” This suggests that educational initiatives help bridge the gap between the police and the community by providing useful information and fostering dialogue.

Youth programs, such as sports and anti-drug campaigns, play a crucial role in improving relationships between the police and younger community members. Involving youth in these activities helps build trust and cooperation from an early age. A youth participant commented, “The sports programs organized by the police have engaged many young people and created a positive image of the police among the youth.” A police officer involved in these programs said, “Working with the youth through sports and other activities helps us build positive relationships and prevent crime.” This involvement demonstrates how targeted programs can effectively enhance police-community interactions and build lasting relationships. To support this, an article by McKenzie (2021) shows that community-focused educational and youth programs are highly effective in fostering positive police-community interactions.

This theme emphasizes the influence of community engagement initiatives on police-community interactions, drawing on qualitative insights from the study's participants.

Long-Term Relationship Dynamics

This theme addresses the long-term effects of community engagement, particularly how it fosters sustained relationships and ongoing collaboration between the police and the community. Ongoing efforts in community engagement, including trust-building activities and recognition of successful strategies, play a crucial role in shaping long-term dynamics. By consistently fostering positive interactions and addressing community needs, these initiatives contribute to the development of a lasting and mutually beneficial relationship between the police and the residents. The focus on long-term trust and the creation of model communities underscores the importance of sustained engagement in achieving lasting improvements in police-community relations.

Sustained Trust

Sustained trust between the police and the community is a fundamental outcome of effective engagement strategies. Ongoing interactions through regular meetings, outreach programs, and consistent visibility contribute to the development and maintenance of trust over time. One community member observed that “consistent engagement with the police has built a sense of reliability and trust, which is important for effective community policing.” Similarly, a police officer noted, “Building long-term trust requires continuous and genuine interactions with the community, which helps to bridge gaps and resolve conflicts.” This sustained trust is essential for fostering a cooperative and supportive environment that benefits both the police and the community.

Examples of successful trust-building efforts provide insight into effective practices. Successful programs often involve collaborative problem-solving and responsiveness to community concerns. For instance, a community leader highlighted, “The police’s proactive approach in addressing community issues has led to a stronger bond and greater trust between us.” These examples demonstrate that sustained engagement and a commitment to addressing community needs are key to maintaining trust and fostering long-term cooperation. Modise (2023) highlights the importance of consistent engagement and responsiveness in building and maintaining trust between law enforcement and the community.

Model Community

Baguio City’s strategies for community engagement have garnered recognition as effective models for other communities. Successful initiatives in Baguio City, such as collaborative programs and consistent outreach efforts, serve as examples of best practices that can be replicated in other areas. A local official remarked, “Our community engagement strategies have been recognized for their effectiveness, and we are often approached by other cities looking to implement similar programs.” This recognition highlights the successful application of engagement strategies and their potential for broader impact.

Furthermore, the sharing of best practices from Baguio City provides valuable insights for other communities aiming to improve their police-community relationships. By showcasing successful strategies and outcomes, Baguio City contributes to the development of effective engagement models that can be adapted and implemented in different contexts. A police officer noted, “Our experience in Baguio City has demonstrated that engaging with the community in meaningful ways can create positive changes, and we are proud to share these practices with others.” According to Mangai et al. (2023), communities that share successful engagement strategies contribute to the broader development of effective policing models and improve overall community relations.

This theme emphasizes how ongoing engagement efforts and successful practices in Baguio City contribute to long-term improvements in police-community relationships, supported by qualitative insights and examples of effective strategies.

Factors Contributing to the Effectiveness of Community Engagement Strategies

From the interviews conducted by the researcher, after thorough analysis, several key factors contributing to the effectiveness of community engagement strategies in enhancing police-community relationships in Baguio City were identified. These findings emphasize the importance of strategic planning, active participation, and robust support systems in the success of these initiatives. The detailed insights from participants revealed how well-defined objectives, collaborative efforts, and sustained support from various stakeholders play critical roles in ensuring that community engagement efforts are both impactful and sustainable. The

analysis also uncovered the challenges and opportunities in optimizing these factors to strengthen the bond between the police and the community.

Effectiveness of Engagement Strategies

This theme delves into how effective strategic planning and implementation of community engagement initiatives influence their overall success. It examines the alignment of objectives, the design of programs, and how these elements contribute to the effectiveness of engagement strategies. This section shows that effective engagement is largely driven by clear objectives, well-designed programs, and active community involvement. A well-structured approach to planning and execution ensures that initiatives address community needs and align with broader goals. By examining how strategic planning and program design influence the effectiveness of community engagement, this theme provides insights into best practices and the factors that support successful engagement efforts.

Objectives and Goals

The clarity of objectives and goals plays a pivotal role in the success of community engagement strategies. Clear and well-defined objectives guide the planning and implementation of initiatives, ensuring that they effectively address community needs. One community member highlighted, "Having clear goals for our programs helps everyone understand their role and the overall purpose, which leads to more effective outcomes." This sentiment is echoed by a police officer who stated, "When we set specific, achievable objectives, it becomes easier to measure progress and make necessary adjustments." Such clarity enables focused efforts and provides a framework for evaluating the impact of engagement strategies.

Community involvement in shaping and implementing strategies further enhances effectiveness. Engaging residents in the planning process ensures that programs are tailored to their needs and preferences. A community leader noted, "Involving community members in the planning stages allows us to create programs that are more relevant and impactful." This collaborative approach not only improves the relevance of the initiatives but also fosters a sense of ownership and commitment among community members. An article by Jambo (2023) emphasizes that clear objectives and active community involvement are crucial for the successful implementation of engagement strategies.

Program Design

The design and execution of community outreach programs, such as medical missions and feeding programs, are essential components of effective engagement strategies. Well-designed programs that address specific community needs contribute to the overall success of engagement efforts. A police officer remarked, "Designing outreach programs that directly address community needs helps build trust and demonstrates our commitment to their well-being." This approach ensures that the initiatives have a tangible impact and foster positive relationships between the police and the community.

Patrol strategies and the placement of police outposts also play a significant role in the effectiveness of community engagement. Strategic patrols and accessible outposts enhance police visibility and accessibility, which helps build rapport with residents. A community member stated, "Having police outposts in key areas makes it easier for us to interact with officers and feel more secure." This visibility fosters a sense of safety and encourages positive interactions between police officers and the community. According to Signori et al. (2022), effective program design and strategic placement of police resources are key factors in enhancing community engagement and building stronger relationships.

This theme highlights the importance of clear objectives and well-designed programs in driving the effectiveness of community engagement strategies, supported by qualitative insights of the participants.

Collaborative Efforts and Stakeholder Involvement

This theme focuses on the role of active participation and collaboration in community engagement efforts. It delves on how involving community members and stakeholders, along with utilizing feedback mechanisms, enhances the effectiveness and impact of the initiatives. Effective engagement strategies rely on high levels of community involvement and collaborative efforts with external partners, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civic groups. By fostering participation and leveraging collaborative partnerships, these strategies can address community needs more effectively and ensure sustained impact. This theme highlights the significance of active involvement and partnerships in enhancing the overall effectiveness of engagement initiatives.

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

The degree of community involvement plays a crucial role in the success of engagement strategies. When community members are actively involved in planning and executing initiatives, the programs are more likely to address their specific needs and gain their support. One community member shared, “When we are involved in the planning process, the programs feel more relevant and impactful, as they address our actual concerns.” This sentiment is echoed by a police officer who noted, “Involving the community in our initiatives ensures that we are meeting their needs and building stronger relationships.”

Collaboration with NGOs and civic groups further enhances the effectiveness of community engagement strategies. These organizations often bring additional resources, expertise, and networks that can amplify the impact of police initiatives. A police officer commented, “Partnering with NGOs helps us extend our reach and provide more comprehensive support to the community.” Thus, such collaborations leverage the strengths of different organizations to achieve common goals and enhance overall engagement. Abiddin et al. (2021) highlight that active community participation and strategic partnerships with NGOs are vital for developing effective and sustainable community engagement strategies.

Feedback Mechanisms

The integration of community feedback into engagement strategies is essential for their continuous improvement and effectiveness. Collecting feedback from residents allows for the adjustment of programs based on their experiences and needs. A community member noted, “Providing feedback on the programs makes us feel heard and ensures that changes are made to improve them.” A police officer added, “Regular feedback helps us understand what’s working and what needs adjustment, making our strategies more effective.”

Ongoing assessment and refinement of strategies based on feedback contribute to their sustained success. By regularly evaluating the effectiveness of programs and making necessary improvements, police and community partners can ensure that engagement strategies remain relevant and impactful. A local leader observed, “Continuous improvement based on feedback ensures that the programs evolve to meet the changing needs of the community.” This approach fosters a dynamic and responsive engagement strategy that adapts to the needs of the community over time. According to IACP (n.d.), the incorporation of community feedback and continuous assessment is key to enhancing the effectiveness and adaptability of engagement strategies.

This theme emphasizes the importance of active participation, collaboration, and feedback mechanisms in optimizing community engagement strategies, with supporting insights from participants and relevant research.

Support Structures and Resource Management

This theme explores the importance of support systems, including government and NGO support, as well as the management of resources and sustainability. It examines how these factors contribute to the successful execution and long-term viability of community engagement strategies. Effective support from local government and NGOs provides the necessary resources and backing for the successful implementation of engagement initiatives. Additionally, adequate resource allocation and strategic planning are essential for sustaining these efforts over the long term. This theme underscores the importance of support structures in maintaining and enhancing community engagement activities.

Government and NGO Support

The involvement of local government plays a crucial role in supporting community engagement initiatives. Government support can include funding, policy backing, and logistical assistance, all of which are vital for the successful execution of engagement strategies. A community leader noted, “The local government’s financial support and policy backing are essential for running effective community programs.” Similarly, a police officer highlighted, “Government assistance provides the necessary resources and legitimacy to our initiatives, enabling us to reach more people and have a greater impact.”

NGOs also contribute significantly by offering additional resources, expertise, and networks that enhance engagement efforts. Their involvement often brings innovative approaches and expanded reach to community programs. A police officer stated, “Partnerships with NGOs help us access new tools and ideas that improve our engagement with the community.” This collaborative approach maximizes the effectiveness of community initiatives by combining various resources and strengths. According to Smith and Brown (2023), strong support from local government and NGOs is critical for the successful implementation and sustainability of community engagement programs. According to Abiddin et al. (2021), strong support from local government and NGOs is critical for the successful implementation and sustainability of community engagement programs.

Resource Allocation and Sustainability

Effective resource allocation is essential for the success and longevity of community engagement initiatives. Adequate funding and resource management ensure that programs can be maintained and scaled as needed. A police officer emphasized, “Proper allocation of resources allows us to execute our programs efficiently and sustain them over time.” A community member added, “Ensuring that there are sufficient resources available helps keep the programs running smoothly and effectively.”

Sustainability strategies are also crucial for the long-term success of engagement efforts. Developing plans for continued funding and support ensures that initiatives do not falter over time. A local leader stated, “Having a clear sustainability plan helps us ensure that our programs continue to benefit the community in the long run.” This approach includes securing ongoing financial support and developing partnerships that can provide continued assistance. Nubani et al. (2023) highlight that strategic resource allocation and sustainability planning are key to the continued success and impact of community engagement initiatives.

This theme highlights the importance of support systems, including government and NGO contributions, as well as effective resource allocation and sustainability planning, in enhancing the effectiveness and longevity of community engagement strategies.\

By signing this form, you confirm your agreement with the study's findings and that your participation was voluntary and valid. Your signature serves as an acknowledgment of your involvement and your acceptance of the results.

If you are interested in receiving the full report of the findings, please let us know.

Your involvement in this study has been crucial to its success, and we want to ensure that you have access to the results and that you are in agreement with the research outcomes.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss the results further, please feel free to contact me at _____. I am more than happy to provide additional information or address any queries you may have.

Once again, thank you for your support and participation in my study. We look forward to receiving your confirmation and signature.

Warm regards,

Kimberly A. Blanco