

Bantay Kaisipan: Mental Health Programs for Police Officers in a Highly Urbanized City

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Abstract

The mental health and well-being of police officers are critical yet often overlooked aspects of law enforcement. This study aims to assess the implementation of the Bantay Kaisipan Program within the Philippine National Police (PNP) in a highly urbanized city. The study addresses the importance of mental health programs in law enforcement, aiming to enhance officers' well-being and operational effectiveness. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research combines quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to gather comprehensive data. Findings indicate that while there is moderate-high awareness and satisfactory implementation of the program, significant challenges persist, such as stigma, workload, and inadequate training and evaluation mechanisms. While the Bantay Kaisipan Program positively impacts mental health awareness and resilience, addressing the identified barriers is crucial for its success. This research fills a gap in the literature by providing insights into the practical challenges of implementing mental health programs in police settings. The study's findings underscore the need for improved training, better logistical support, and enhanced evaluation processes to ensure the program's long-term effectiveness and sustainability.

Keywords: mental health program, mental health awareness and barriers, law enforcers, police officers, highly urbanized city

Introduction

Mental health is a critical aspect of overall well-being, and its importance is particularly pronounced in high-stress professions such as law enforcement (Blanco et al., 2023). The nature of law enforcement work exposes officers to various stressors, including the constant demand for vigilance, the potential for dangerous encounters, and the overall pressures associated with maintaining public safety (Granderson, 2020). According to Daniel (2023), there is a significant correlation between higher operational work stress and adverse mental health outcomes among police officers. Those with high operational work stress were significantly more likely to experience burnout, distress, and depression. Additionally, those facing high operational work stress were nearly six times more likely to exhibit a high level of at least one indicator of mental health problems (Daniel, 2023). Thus, it underscores the urgent need to address mental health concerns among law enforcement officers.

Duran et al. (2019) revealed that occupational trauma and stress experienced in the course of duty are significant contributors to the emergence of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, substance use disorder, and suicidal thoughts among police personnel. According to Queirós et al. (2020), the demanding nature of police work could have adverse effects on the physical and mental well-being of officers, potentially resulting in burnout, aggressive behaviors, and suicide. Thus, suicides among police personnel have been associated with anxiety and stress problems. It is estimated

that for every police suicide, approximately 1,000 officers continue to work despite symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (Badge of Life, 2017, as cited by, Blanco et al., 2023).

Acknowledging the impact of these stressors on mental health, the Philippine National Police (PNP) introduced the Bantay Kaisipan program, aimed at addressing the unique challenges faced by police officers, particularly their mental well-being. In response to recent incidents involving police officers, PNP Chief Police General Guillermo Eleazar is actively considering the implementation of regular neuropsychiatric (NP) tests every three years for all PNP personnel (Demigillo, 2021). PNP Chief Eleazar emphasizes the need for enhanced monitoring of emotional and mental health stability among police officers and intends to explore collaborations with mental health-supportive institutions for accessible testing. This initiative, along with the ongoing 'Bantay Kaisipan' program, signifies a comprehensive approach to address mental health concerns within the PNP (Demigillo, 2021). This mental health program can provide support and resources to help officers cope with stress, prevent burnout, and address the mental health problems they may encounter (Daniel, 2023). However, the effectiveness of such programs is contingent upon their successful implementation and the ability to address the specific challenges faced by the individuals they aim to support.

Thus, this study seeks to conduct a thorough evaluation of the Bantay Kaisipan program among police officers in a highly urbanized city delving into its implementation, challenges encountered, and the potential for improvement. The primary purpose of this study is to evaluate the level of attainment in implementing the Bantay Kaisipan program within the PNP. Additionally, the study seeks to identify the challenges encountered during the program's implementation.

This study holds substantial significance in offering valuable insights that can inform policy decisions and program development within the PNP. By identifying strengths, weaknesses, and challenges associated with the Bantay Kaisipan program, the findings aim to catalyze improvements tailored to address the mental health needs of police officers. Policymakers can utilize recommendations derived from officers to craft targeted interventions, ultimately fostering improved mental health outcomes and job performance. Such enhancements not only benefit law enforcement personnel but also contribute to better public service delivery and increased citizen satisfaction.

Mental health among police officers and the effectiveness of mental health programs are essential aspects of their overall well-being and ability to serve and protect the community effectively. Wu et al. (2023) revealed that the prevalence of mental health problems among police officers was found to be 38.74%. This percentage suggests that a significant proportion of police officers, approximately 38.74% of the total police officers, exhibited symptoms of mental health disorders during the course of a crisis. It highlights the potential impact of work-related stress and risk perception on the mental well-being of frontline police officers facing challenging circumstances during the health crisis. Thus, the study also emphasizes the need for establishing internal mental health problem-coping teams within police organizations to improve officers' mental health resilience during challenging times like the COVID-19 pandemic (Wu et al., 2023).

The article written by Demegillo (2021) discusses the initiative of the Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief, Police General Guillermo Eleazar, to consider conducting regular neuropsychiatric (NP) tests for all police personnel as part of monitoring their emotional and mental health stability. The proposal aims to implement mandatory NP tests every three years, following a similar practice in the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). The PNP is exploring ways to make these tests accessible and available to all personnel, including potential tie-ups with facilities and institutions that support mental health (Demegillo, 2021). According to Ragasa (2023), the move comes in response to recent incidents, such as the shooting of a woman in Quezon City by a drunk police officer, raising concerns about the drinking habits of police personnel. The PNP also advocates for the

"Bantay Kaisipan" program, aiming to monitor officers' mental and emotional well-being. Additionally, the PNP is proposing the establishment of a medical plaza and improved health service to address the mental and emotional needs of police officers effectively. The initiatives demonstrate the PNP's commitment to enhancing mental health programs to ensure the well-being of its personnel in the demanding role of law enforcement (Ragasa, 2023).

Milliard (2020) addresses the elevated rates of mental health disorders among police officers, often attributed to the stigma associated with seeking help. The findings revealed that peer support is crucial in enhancing mental health literacy among police officers and significantly contributes to stigma reduction. Thus, it highlighted the importance of discussing shared experiences regarding the lack of standardized systems for administering and implementing peer support in line with the Policy Feedback Theory. Similarly, Velazquez and Hernandez (2019) revealed that job-related trauma and stress often lead to the development of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, substance use disorder, and suicidal thoughts among police officers. The stigma correlated with seeking mental health treatment was found to be influenced by both organizational factors, such as occupational stress characteristics, and environmental factors, such as adherence to social and law enforcement culture ideologies. Further, the study provides valuable insights into the severity of mental health issues among police officers and innovative treatment approaches to improve mental wellness in a field where trauma is experienced daily (Velazquez & Hernandez, 2019).

To support the study above, Soomro and Yanos (2019) revealed that police officers experienced high rates of trauma exposure and higher rates of current post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) than the general population. These results have significant implications for the training and programs of police officers regarding mental health, suggesting the need for effective interventions to address stigma and promote a more supportive and understanding attitude toward mental illness among law enforcement personnel (Soomro & Yanos, 2019). In addition, McLeod et al. (2020) suggest that police interactions may significantly impact mental health. Thus, the study recommends changes in law enforcement policy, the development of a validated instrument and programs for measuring police experiences, improved community outreach, federal review of police policy and practice, and enhanced police training initiatives to mitigate the potential negative mental health consequences of police interactions (McLeod et al., 2020).

Blumberg et al. (2019) emphasized the need for modern police academy training and programs to go beyond traditional focus areas like law and skills, such as control and arrest, defensive tactics, driving, and firearms. The study highlights the importance of incorporating psychological skills (cognitive, emotional, social, and moral) in police training to equip officers to deal with the complexities of contemporary policing effectively. By infusing academy training and programs with these essential psychological skills, the study suggests that officers' wellness can be improved, and positive relationships between police officers and community members can be fostered (Blumberg et al., 2019). On the other hand, the study by Baron et al. (2021) identified emergent themes, such as fear, discontent, and handling delinquent individuals, that underscore the potential impact of challenging and high-stress situations on the mental well-being of police officers. Considering the prevalence of stress and its potential effects on police officers' mental health, implementing and assessing mental health programs becomes essential. Such programs can provide vital support and resources to help police officers cope with the stressors they encounter in their line of duty, including those brought about by unprecedented events like the COVID-19 pandemic (Baron et al., 2021).

According to Daniel (2023), police officers with high operational work stress were also more likely to experience high levels of burnout, distress, and depression. High operational work stress emerged as a strong predictor of overall mental health status, indicating that front-liners with high

operational work stress were likelier to have mental health problems. In addition, the study stated that strategies to improve mental health-seeking behaviors were suggested by implementing a functional mental health surveillance system using an innovative mental health app. The study contributes valuable insights into the mental health challenges faced by police officers. It highlights the importance of assessing and enhancing mental health programs like "Bantay Kaisipan" to support their well-being during challenging times (Daniel, 2023).

Similarly, the study by Stogner et al. (2020) on police stress, mental health, and resiliency during the COVID-19 pandemic provides valuable insights into the specific challenges that law enforcement officers face during crises. The study's findings have implications for assessing mental health programs among police officers, as it emphasizes the need to address officers' mental health and well-being, especially during times of heightened stress and uncertainty. Incorporating resiliency-building strategies and mental health support into the assessment and implementation of mental health programs can help address the challenges faced by police officers during crises. Thus, it underscores the significance of considering the impact of external stressors on officers' mental health and ensuring that the mental health programs are comprehensive and responsive to officers' needs (Stogner et al., 2020). On the other hand, Marshall et al. (2021) identifies police officers who may be experiencing mental health symptoms to provide timely support and interventions. However, the study found that police officers tended to under-report symptoms of mental health disorders when completing screening administered by their employer. The findings highlight the limitations of employer-administered mental health screening in accurately capturing all mental health symptoms among police officers. The severity of symptoms predicted the level of under-reporting, suggesting that simple changes to cut-off values may not address this issue effectively (Marshall et al., 2021).

The study by Syed et al. (2020) identified higher occupational stress as a strong risk factor for depression and suicidal ideation. In comparison, higher occupational stress and avoidant coping strategies were associated with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). On the other hand, higher levels of peer support were linked to lower PTSD symptoms. Thus, Pacpaco (2023) emphasizes the urgent need for mental health training for Philippine National Police (PNP) personnel to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to handle individuals in crisis situations effectively.

Moreover, according to Caliwan (2021), PNP chief Gen. Guillermo Eleazar urged police commanders to closely observe the behavior of their personnel, especially those showing signs of emotional and mental health problems. Gen. Eleazar emphasized the need for neuro-psychiatric tests to assess the mental and emotional capability of police personnel during the recruitment and training stages. He believes such tests will help prevent incidents of violence and self-harm within the organization. The PNP chief is considering implementing regular neuro-psychiatric tests for all police personnel in response to recent cases of violence involving police officers (Caliwan, 2021).

The correlation between mental health and the effectiveness of programs designed for police officers is a critical focus within the existing literature. Wu et al. (2023) showed a high prevalence of mental health concerns among officers, emphasizing the importance of the formation of internal coping organizations. Exploring the initiative led by PNP Chief Eleazar, Demegillo (2021) delves into the implementation of regular neuropsychiatric tests and the "Bantay Kaisipan" program, strategically devised to monitor the emotional and mental well-being of officers systematically. Emphasizing the role of peer support, Milliard (2020) highlights its function in mitigating stigma associated with mental health. Thus, investigating the repercussions of job-related trauma, Velazquez and Hernandez (2019) shed light on its profound impact on the emergence of mental health issues among police officers. On the other hand, Soomro and Yanos (2019) draw attention to elevated rates of trauma exposure and persistent stigma surrounding mental illness within the law enforcement com-

munity. Additionally, in advocating for policy changes, McLeod et al. (2020) emphasize the necessity of addressing potential negative mental health consequences arising from police interactions.

This study addresses several gaps identified in the existing literature on mental health among police officers. While the literature recognizes the significance of mental health programs such as "Bantay Kaisipan," it tends to lack a comprehensive evaluation of the level of attainment in implementing these programs. Most studies focus on discussing the prevalence of mental health issues without delving into the effectiveness, awareness, and accessibility of existing initiatives. Furthermore, there is a noticeable gap in the literature concerning the exploration of specific challenges encountered during the implementation of mental health programs. These gaps highlight the need for a focused study that assesses the program's level of awareness and attainment within the PNP and explores the challenges specific to its implementation in a highly urbanized city. This research aims to bridge these gaps and contribute to a more complex understanding of mental health initiatives tailored for law enforcement.

Theoretical Framework

In exploring the mental health dynamics within the context of police work, this study relies on the Stress Process Model by Pearlin et al. in 1981 and the Job Demand-Control-Support (JDCS) Model by Karasek and Theorell in 1990. These theoretical perspectives offer an understanding of how stressors, job demands, and organizational support collectively contribute to the mental well-being of police officers. According to the Stress Process Model, stressors such as job-related trauma and high operational work stress can have a negative impact on police officers' mental health. This model describes how external stressors affect individuals, considering both primary stressors (objective life events and chronic strains) and secondary stressors (individual cognitive appraisal and coping strategies) (Wang et al., 2023).

On the other hand, the Job Demand-Control-Support Model offers insights into how job-related factors contribute to mental health outcomes. It was indicated that high job demands, combined with limited control over work tasks and inadequate organizational support, are identified as significant contributors to heightened stress levels and mental health issues among employees, including police officers (Towler, 2020). The use of these frameworks provides an established theoretical structure for understanding the complexity of psychological challenges in law enforcement, as well as guiding the assessment of the implementation of mental health programs in reducing these stress factors.

Schematic Diagram of the Study

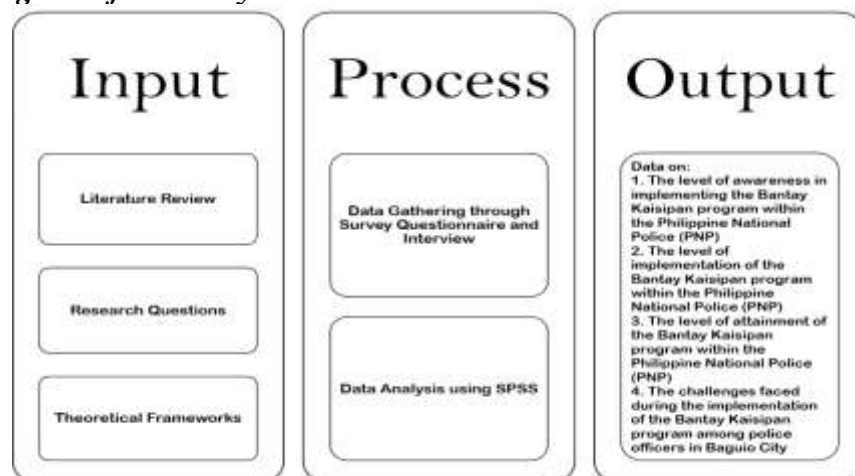


Figure 1. Conceptual Model of the Study

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework guiding this study, which comprises three main components: the input phase, the research process, and the output phase. The study starts with the input phase, encompassing the existing literature and the formulation of research questions. These elements serve as the foundational inputs, guiding the subsequent research process. To answer the study questions, the gathered data are methodically reviewed and evaluated. In the output phase, the study concludes with key findings regarding the level of awareness, attainment, and challenges faced during the implementation of the Bantay Kaisipan Program.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to provide valuable insights to the Philippine National Police (PNP) and relevant authorities in a highly urbanized City regarding the implementation of the Bantay Kaisipan program. The findings help identify strengths, weaknesses, and challenges, leading to necessary improvements for better addressing the mental health needs of police officers. Policymakers can utilize the recommendations from officers to develop targeted interventions, fostering engagement and improving mental health outcomes. Ultimately, prioritizing the mental well-being of law enforcement personnel can lead to enhanced job performance, reduced burnout, and improved community interactions, contributing to better public service delivery and citizen satisfaction. The research holds significance in the broader context of public safety and has the potential to influence policy decisions and program development, benefiting police officers' well-being.

Statement of the Problem

This study addressed the following research problems:

1. What is the level of awareness in implementing the Bantay Kaisipan program within the Philippine National Police (PNP)?
2. What is the level of implementation of the Bantay Kaisipan program within the Philippine National Police (PNP)?
3. What is the level of attainment of the Bantay Kaisipan program within the Philippine National Police (PNP)?
4. What are the challenges faced during the implementation of the Bantay Kaisipan program among police officers in Baguio City?

Materials and Methods

The research method implemented for this study is a mixed-methods, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively evaluate the Bantay Kaisipan program within the Philippine National Police (PNP). To address questions on awareness, implementation, attainment, and challenges, a structured survey was administered to PNP officers in a highly urbanized city. The qualitative aspect involves semi-structured interviews with a subset of survey participants, delving into the specific challenges faced during program implementation. Thematic analysis of interview responses provided rich, contextual insights. The subsequent analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data was conducted separately initially, employing statistical techniques for quantitative findings and coding for qualitative insights. The integrated results offered a holistic understanding of the program's current status, challenges, and potential improvements. Further, all participants in the study were given the option to remain anonymous.

The sample population comprised 200 police officers in the city for the quantitative aspect. The selection of participants involved purposive sampling, encompassing active-duty officers with a minimum of one year of service and key officials involved in designing and overseeing mental health programs for police officers in the city. Additionally, 15 participants were selected specifically for the qualitative aspect of the study. All participants met the criteria of being Filipino citizens

and currently residing within the jurisdiction of the city. This sample size aligned with Minsel's (2022) recommendation that sample sizes ranging from 200 to 300 respondents provide a reasonable margin of error without reaching the point of decreasing returns. Raosoft is a tool used to calculate the required sample size based on several factors: the margin of error, confidence level, population size, and response distribution.

The data collection method for this study involved a quantitative approach utilizing a structured questionnaire designed to evaluate the attainment and implementation of the "Bantay Kaisipan" Program among police officers. The questionnaire included specific items targeting participants' awareness of the programs, their level of engagement, perceived benefits or challenges, and suggestions for improvement. The structured nature of the questionnaire ensured consistency in data collection, allowing for a systematic analysis of responses. The Likert scale rating was arranged into four categories for each construct: awareness, implementation, and attainment. These categories ranged from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree," providing an understanding of respondents' perspectives on the program's effectiveness and impact.

Table 1. Level of Awareness in implementing the Bantay Kaisipan program within the PNP

Rating Scale	Mean Range	Verbal Description	Interpretation
1	1.00 – 1.74	Strongly disagree	Low Awareness Exhibit limited knowledge or understanding of the Bantay Kaisipan program. Significant education and information dissemination are required to increase their understanding and engagement with the program.
2	1.75 – 2.49	Disagree	Moderate Low Awareness Possess some basic knowledge about the Bantay Kaisipan program but need a comprehensive understanding. There is room for improvement in their awareness levels through targeted training, communication efforts, and practical demonstrations of the program's effectiveness.
3	2.50 – 3.24	Agree	Moderate-High Awareness Understand the Bantay Kaisipan program's objectives, principles, and relevance within the PNP. They actively seek information, participate in relevant discussions, and demonstrate a willingness to support the program's goals.
4	3.25 – 4.00	Strongly Agree	High Awareness Exhibit a comprehensive understanding of the Bantay Kaisipan program, its significance, and its integration into PNP operations. They serve as advocates and leaders in promoting the program's adoption, actively engaging in its implementation, and contributing to its continuous improvement within the PNP.

Table 2. Level of Implementation of the Bantay Kaisipan program within the PNP

Rating Scale	Mean Range	Verbal Description	Interpretation
1	1.00 – 1.74	Strongly disagree	Not Implemented Represents situations where the Bantay Kaisipan program has yet to be initiated or integrated into the operations of the PNP. There needs to be more evidence of any efforts to implement the program, with no visible adoption or application within the organization. Lack of resources, awareness, or institutional support may contribute to the program's non-implementation.
2	1.75 – 2.49	Disagree	Slightly Implemented A minimal or sporadic application of the Bantay Kaisipan program within the PNP. While some initial steps may have been taken to introduce the program, its integration into routine practices or widespread adoption still needs to be improved. Implementation efforts may be hindered by challenges such as inadequate training, inconsistent enforcement, or competing organizational priorities.
3	2.50 – 3.24	Agree	Implemented Signifies a satisfactory level of adoption and execution of the Bantay Kaisipan program across relevant departments or units within the PNP. There is evidence of regular use and adherence to program protocols, with personnel actively engaging in program activities and initiatives. While there may be areas for improvement, the program has been successfully integrated into the operational framework of the PNP, contributing to its overall effectiveness.
4	3.25 – 4:00	Strongly Agree	Much Implemented Reflects a high commitment and proficiency in executing the Bantay Kaisipan program within the PNP. The program is deeply ingrained in organizational culture, with widespread acceptance and participation from personnel at all levels. There is a strong emphasis on continuous improvement and innovation to enhance the program's impact and sustainability.

Table 3. Level of Attainment of the Bantay Kaisipan program within the PNP

Rating Scale	Mean Range	Verbal Description	Interpretation
1	1.00 – 1.74	Strongly disagree	Not Attained This signifies a situation where the objectives or goals of the Bantay Kaisipan program have yet to be achieved within the PNP. More evidence of progress or success in meeting the de-

Rating Scale	Mean Range	Verbal Description	Interpretation
			sired outcomes or targets set forth by the program needs to be provided. Factors contributing to non-attainment may include inadequate resources, ineffective implementation strategies, or external challenges beyond the organization's control.
2	1.75 – 2.49	Disagree	Slightly Attained Indicates partial progress or limited success in achieving the objectives of the Bantay Kaisipan program within the PNP. While some positive developments or accomplishments may exist, they need to fully meet the intended goals or standards. Challenges such as resistance to change, insufficient support, or unforeseen obstacles may have hindered the program's effectiveness.
3	2.50 – 3.24	Agree	Attained Attained reflects a satisfactory level of accomplishment and success in realizing the objectives and targets of the Bantay Kaisipan program within the Philippine National Police. The program has made significant strides in achieving its intended outcomes, with tangible evidence of progress and impact observed across relevant areas of operation. Key performance indicators are met, and there is a consensus that the program has contributed positively to organizational goals and priorities.
4	3.25 – 4:00	Strongly Agree	Much Attained Represents a high level of attainment and excellence in the implementation and outcomes of the Bantay Kaisipan program within the PNP. The program has exceeded expectations, demonstrating outstanding results and transformative effects on organizational culture, practices, and performance. It is a model of best practices, innovation, and success, inspiring replication and emulation within the PNP and across similar institutions.

Data Gathering Procedure

Quantitative data was collected through online surveys utilizing Google Forms, ensuring a systematic and efficient process. Participants received a thorough briefing outlining the study's objectives and clear instructions on survey completion. To address potential concerns or confusion arising from technological challenges during the online survey, participants were encouraged to seek clarification.

In addition to the quantitative approach, qualitative data was obtained through in-depth interviews with a subset of 15 selected participants. This qualitative component aimed to provide rich-

er insights into participants' experiences, allowing for a better understanding of the implementation challenges and potential areas for improvement in the "Bantay Kaisipan" Program.

Treatment of Data

To address the first objective, "What is the level of awareness in implementing the Bantay Kaisipan program within the Philippine National Police (PNP)?", the collected quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Measures of central tendency, such as the mean and standard deviation, were calculated to summarize key features of awareness among police officers. The analysis provided insights into the overall awareness level, identifying areas where officers were most and least informed about the program.

For the second and third objectives, similar statistical techniques were applied.

For the fourth objective, "What are the challenges faced during the implementation of the Bantay Kaisipan program among police officers in Baguio City?", qualitative data from structured interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis. This approach involved identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns or themes within the qualitative data. The analysis revealed significant challenges related to the program's implementation, such as integration issues, communication effectiveness, and barriers like stigma and workload. These insights were crucial for understanding the obstacles and formulating recommendations for improving the program's effectiveness.

The combined quantitative and qualitative findings provided a comprehensive understanding of the Bantay Kaisipan program's awareness, implementation, and attainment levels within the PNP. They also highlighted the specific challenges faced during the program's implementation, contributing to evidence-based recommendations for enhancing mental health support for police officers in a highly urbanized city in the Philippines.

Ethical Consideration

This study prioritized ethical guidelines to safeguard the rights and well-being of participants, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Upholding confidentiality, voluntary participation, and informed consent were important components of the ethical framework. For the qualitative phase, participants were invited to engage in in-depth interviews to glean deeper insights into their experiences with the "Bantay Kaisipan" Program.

Data collection via Google Forms for the quantitative aspect emphasized privacy, allowing participants to withdraw at any stage without facing consequences. Throughout the study, the confidentiality of all participant information was maintained. Participants were given the option to keep their information confidential, but no one opted for non-disclosure. Further, the study incorporated several risk management strategies to minimize potential risks to participants. These included providing participants with detailed information about the study, ensuring voluntary participation, and allowing participants to withdraw at any time without consequences. Additionally, measures were taken to ensure that participation in the study posed no long-term harm. Psychological support was available to participants if discussing mental health issues caused any distress. The study ensured that all sensitive information was securely stored and only accessible to authorized personnel. Participants were provided with a debriefing statement elucidating the study's purpose and addressing any concerns. All requisite permissions and approvals were obtained before initiating the research. Lastly, the name of the city was coded, highly urbanized city" in order to protect the identity the people in authority that were interviewed.

Results and Discussion

This part of the study features the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data on the assessment of the Bantay Kaisipan Program among police officers in a highly urbanized city.

Table 4. Level of Awareness in Implementing the Bantay Kaisipan Program within the Philippine National Police (PNP)

Indicators	Mean	Std.	Descriptive Interpretation
1. I am familiar with the objectives of the "Bantay Kaisipan" Program.	3.23	0.811	Agree
2. I can accurately describe the activities under the "Bantay Kaisipan" Program	3.11	0.684	Agree
3. Finding information about the "Bantay Kaisipan" Program is easy for me.	3.02	0.685	Agree
4. The available information provides a clear representation of the goals and activities of the program.	3.12	0.645	Agree
5. I understand the specific achievements and impact of the "Bantay Kaisipan" Program	3.14	0.648	Agree
6. The program has significantly improved officers' awareness of mental health issues.	3.18	0.679	Agree
7. I am well-informed about how the "Bantay Kaisipan" Program supports officers' mental well-being.	3.16	0.724	Agree
8. I actively seek information about the "Bantay Kaisipan" Program.	3.06	0.705	Agree
9. I believe the "Bantay Kaisipan" Program plays a crucial role in addressing mental health challenges.	3.20	0.681	Agree
10. The program has positively influenced my perception and understanding of mental health.	3.17	0.674	Agree
OVER-ALL	3.15	0.664	Agree

The table displays respondents' awareness on the implementation of the Bantay Kaisipan Program within the PNP in which all agreed indicating that, on average, the respondents portray moderate-high awareness. This is very evident in the average mean of 3.15 and a standard deviation of 0.664. This increased awareness has created a more supportive environment, reducing the stigma around mental health issues and encouraging proactive management strategies. As a result, these improvements have led to a more efficient and effective police force that is better equipped to handle the demanding challenges of law enforcement.

Results show that the respondents are most aware of the familiarity with the objectives of the "Bantay Kaisipan" Program ($M=3.23$, $SD=0.811$), followed by "I believe the "Bantay Kaisipan" Program plays a crucial role in addressing mental health challenges" ($M=3.20$, $SD=0.681$). This suggests that the respondents understand the Bantay Kaisipan program's objectives, principles, and relevance within the PNP. The respondents actively seek information, participate in relevant discussions, and demonstrate a willingness to support the program's goals. Police officers' mental health is at risk due to stress, so implementing and assessing mental health programs is essential. Daniel (2023) highlighted that this mental health program can provide support and resources to help offi-

cers cope with stress, prevent burnout, and address the mental health problems they may encounter. Also, it is noteworthy to mention that the respondents tend to be less aware on the indicator “Finding information about the "Bantay Kaisipan" Program is easy for me” ($M=3.02$, $SD=0.685$).

Table 5. Level of Implementation of the Bantay Kaisipan Program within the Philippine National Police (PNP)

Indicators	Mean	Std.	Descriptive Interpretation
1. The training sessions for the "Bantay Kaisipan" Program effectively communicated its goals.	3.14	0.656	Agree
2. The program's training adequately prepared me for active participation.	3.10	0.671	Agree
3. I am well-informed about how the "Bantay Kaisipan" Program contributes to officers' mental well-being.	3.15	0.679	Agree
4. The program seamlessly integrates into my daily duties as a police officer.	3.15	0.662	Agree
5. I follow the guidelines in the "Bantay Kaisipan" Program.	3.15	0.676	Agree
6. The communication channels used for the program are effective in reaching participants.	3.13	0.643	Agree
7. The program fits well into my daily tasks and responsibilities.	3.17	0.674	Agree
8. Challenges in incorporating the "Bantay Kaisipan" Program into my duties are manageable.	3.13	0.622	Agree
9. The program provides adequate resources to support officers' mental health.	3.16	0.674	Agree
10. I believe the "Bantay Kaisipan" Program positively impacts the overall well-being of police officers.	3.19	0.691	Agree
OVER-ALL	3.16	0.654	Agree

All the indicators in the implementation of the Bantay Kaisipan Program listed in the table above have a descriptive interpretation of “Agree”. This suggests that the Bantay Kaisipan Program is generally implemented within the PNP since the result signifies a satisfactory level of adoption and execution of the Bantay Kaisipan program across relevant departments or units within the PNP. There is evidence of regular use and adherence to program protocols, with personnel actively engaging in program activities and initiatives. While there may be areas for improvement, the program has been successfully integrated into the operational framework of the PNP, contributing to its overall effectiveness.

The implementation of the Bantay Kaisipan Program positively impacts the overall well-being of police officers has been jotted as the highest ($M=3.19$, $SD=0.691$). The article written by Demegillo (2021) discusses the initiative of the Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief, Police General Guillermo Eleazar, to consider conducting regular neuropsychiatric (NP) tests for all police personnel as part of monitoring their emotional and mental health stability. These initiatives demonstrate the PNP's commitment to enhancing mental health programs to ensure the well-being of its personnel in the demanding role of law enforcement (Ragasa, 2023). It also revealed that the least

implemented in the program is noted, “The program's training adequately prepared me for active participation” (M=3.10, SD=0.671).

While the Bantay Kaisipan Program is intended to address the prevalence of stress and its potential effects on police officers' mental health, Marshall et al. (2021) claims that there are police officers who may be experiencing mental health symptoms to provide timely support and interventions. Pacpaco (2023) emphasized the urgent need for mental health training for Philippine National Police (PNP) personnel to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to handle individuals in crisis situations effectively. The lawmaker, AnaKalusugan Rep. Ray T. Reyes, asserts that such training will not only enhance the safety of communities but also prevent unnecessary harm to individuals experiencing mental health issues. Mental health training is expected to enable PNP personnel to make informed decisions. It also aims to help them cope with their demanding job's mental and emotional toll. Overall, initiatives under this program have greatly improved mental health and promoted a holistic sense of well-being among police personnel.

Table 6. Level of Attainment of the Bantay Kaisipan Program within the Philippine National Police (PNP)

Indicators	Mean	Std.	Descriptive Interpretation
1. The "Bantay Kaisipan" Program has effectively achieved its objectives.	3.13	0.676	Agree
2. I have observed positive changes in the mental well-being of fellow officers due to the program.	3.14	0.664	Agree
3. The program has increased officers' awareness and understanding of mental health.	3.16	0.659	Agree
4. Officers actively engage in the activities proposed by the "Bantay Kaisipan" Program.	3.15	0.654	Agree
5. The program has established clear and achievable goals for improving mental health resilience.	3.16	0.659	Agree
6. Implementing the "Bantay Kaisipan" Program has positively impacted the work environment.	3.14	0.643	Agree
7. Officers have demonstrated improved coping mechanisms for stress and mental health challenges	3.14	0.648	Agree
8. The program has effectively addressed specific mental health issues faced by police officers.	3.13	0.646	Agree
9. I have seen a noticeable reduction in stigma related to mental health concerns within the force.	3.15	0.654	Agree
10. The "Bantay Kaisipan" Program has contributed to a more supportive culture regarding mental health.	3.15	0.654	Agree
OVER-ALL	3.16	0.659	Agree

The table displays the level of attainment of the Bantay Kaisipan Program within the PNP with the agreement to all of the respondents reflecting a satisfactory level of accomplishment and success in realizing the objectives and targets of the Bantay Kaisipan program within the Philippine National Police. The respondents agreed (M= 3.16, SD= 0.659) that the program has yielded significant positive outcomes for the mental health and operational effectiveness of the participating offic-

ers. It has effectively reduced stress levels and provided officers with better coping mechanisms, thereby improving their overall quality of life and job performance. The program has made significant strides in achieving its intended outcomes, with tangible evidence of progress and impact observed across relevant areas of operation. Key performance indicators are met, and there is a consensus that the program has contributed positively to organizational goals and priorities.

The most attained areas in the Bantay Kaisipan Program are, “Increased officers' awareness and understanding of mental health” and “Established clear and achievable goals for improving mental health resilience”. It correlates with the PNP’s response to recent incidents, such as the shooting of a woman in Quezon City by a drunk police officer, raising concerns about the drinking habits of police personnel. The PNP advocates for the "Bantay Kaisipan" program, aiming to monitor officers' mental and emotional well-being.

Table 7. Challenges faced during the Implementation of the Bantay Kaisipan Program

Themes	Subthemes
Integration Challenges	Time and Scheduling Conflicts
	Emotional Regulation and Stress Management
	Organizational and Leadership Support
Communication Effectiveness	Clear Communication System
	Engagement Gaps
Barriers to Implementation	Stigma and Cultural Resistance
	Workload and Time Constraints
	Lack of Awareness and Training
	Inadequate Evaluation and Feedback Mechanisms

Integration Challenges

The integration of the Bantay Kaisipan program into the daily responsibilities of police officers in the city presents significant challenges, as evident under the theme of "Integration Challenges." This theme has three subthemes: “Time and Scheduling Conflicts”, “Emotional Regulation and Stress Management” and “Organizational and Leadership Support”. This emphasizes that police officers often find themselves struggling to balance the additional responsibilities of the program with their already demanding schedules, a common issue in implementing new initiatives within organizational structures. Emotional regulation also emerges as a critical challenge, as the high-pressure nature of police work makes it difficult for officers to maintain composure and manage stress effectively in various situations. Additionally, the effectiveness of the Bantay Kaisipan program is closely tied to the level of organizational and leadership support it receives. Without strong backing from higher-ups and consistent cooperation among personnel, the program's potential impact is significantly diminished. These challenges highlight the need for a strategic approach that aligns the program's goals with the operational realities and support structures of the police force.

Time and Scheduling Conflicts. Integrating mental health programs into law enforcement settings presents unique challenges due to the demanding and unpredictable nature of police work. Understanding these challenges is crucial for ensuring effective implementation and support for programs like Bantay Kaisipan among police officers. Officers frequently encounter clashes between the program's additional responsibilities and their regular duties such as patrols, investigations, and community policing. For instance, Participant 2 mentioned a "conflict of schedule", while

Participant 8 highlighted the importance of "careful time management" to handle all responsibilities efficiently.

"Police officers already have demanding schedules with regular patrols, investigation, and community policing. Integrating the additional responsibilities of the Bantay Kaisipan program, which focuses on mental health awareness and interaction, requires careful time management to ensure all duties are performed effectively. (P8)"

The quantitative data from the study shows that respondents generally agree that finding information about the Bantay Kaisipan Program is easy, but this is the area where they are least aware. This suggests that while officers may understand the program's objectives and importance, there are practical difficulties in accessing and managing the information and responsibilities associated with it. Valmari et al. (2023) similarly noted that police officers often struggle with balancing additional programmatic responsibilities alongside their core duties. These responses underscore the urgent need for the program to introduce more flexible time management strategies or seamlessly integrate into existing workflows.

Emotional Regulation and Stress Management

Addressing the emotional regulation and stress management of police officers is crucial for the successful implementation of the Bantay Kaisipan program, given the demanding and unpredictable nature of their roles. Researches underscore the unique pressures of police work, which include exposure to trauma, high-risk situations, and the need to maintain public safety at all times (Gomgom-o Jr., 2024). These factors contribute significantly to officers' susceptibility to stress and emotional strain, highlighting the critical importance of tailored mental health support. According to the participants of this study, officers frequently encounter challenges in maintaining emotional composure. Specifically, Participant 3 revealed having difficulty in holding their temper and the responsibility to be a role model.

"Being able to hold my temper, especially on roads while driving remembering that I need to be calm when I encounter an irresponsible driver, and be a role model especially when my kids are with me. (P3)"

This statement highlights the dual pressure police officers face in maintaining emotional control in both their professional and personal lives. It underscores the constant need for officers to exhibit restraint and serve as exemplary figures, even outside of their formal duties. This dual role can amplify stress levels and create additional psychological burdens, particularly in environments where emotional reactions are difficult to suppress. Thus, the need for police officers to constantly regulate their emotions, both on duty and off, indicates a significant area where mental health programs like Bantay Kaisipan can provide crucial support. Effective emotional regulation is not only essential for professional performance but also impacts personal relationships and overall well-being. This finding implies that the Bantay Kaisipan program should focus more on training officers in emotional resilience and coping strategies that can be applied in various aspects of their lives.

The quantitative data supports this, showing that respondents agree that the program has positively influenced their perception and understanding of mental health, indicating an increased awareness of the importance of emotional regulation.

To support this finding, Di Nota et al. (2024) emphasized that police officers often face significant emotional and psychological stress due to the demanding nature of their work. Their roles require constant vigilance and the ability to manage intense emotional responses in high-pressure situations. This ongoing emotional regulation is not confined to their professional environment but extends into their personal lives, where they are expected to maintain composure and serve as role models, even during routine activities like driving. These stresses the critical need for programs like

Bantay Kaisipan to offer targeted emotional resilience training and coping strategies that are applicable both on and off duty.

Organizational and Leadership Support. The successful implementation of mental health programs in high-stress environments, such as law enforcement, heavily relies on the support and engagement of organizational leadership. In the context of the Philippine National Police (PNP), the Bantay Kaisipan program is designed to address the mental health needs of police officers, who face daily challenges and significant stressors. Effective leadership is crucial to the program's success, as it shapes the organizational culture and influences the attitudes and behaviors of personnel toward mental health initiatives (Wu et al., 2021). Without strong support from leaders, such programs may struggle to gain traction and achieve their objectives.

Insights from the participants underscore the important role of leadership in prioritizing and advocating for mental health initiatives. For instance, Participant 6 highlighted that the success of the Bantay Kaisipan program will depend on the support from higher-ups.

“One specific challenge that I encountered as a police officer with regards to [the] Bantay Kaisipan Program is the “Leadership Support” in the organization. The success of this program often depends on the support from higher-ups and if the leadership does not prioritize mental health, it can be challenging to implement effective programs. (P6)”

Participant 6 emphasizes the crucial role of leadership in the successful implementation of the Bantay Kaisipan program. This sentiment was supported by other participants who cited challenges in cooperation among personnel and the necessity for more leadership support.

“One specific challenge I encountered while integrating the Bantay Kaisipan is the cooperation among the personnel, some are not taking it seriously. (P11)”

“As a police officer, our job is to serve and protect the community. We are trained and have the capabilities to adapt to every environment we are in. On the contrary, it serves as our downfall sometimes which becomes a challenge for me during the said integration having thought that because of these challenges, I might have negative results. (P12)”

The quantitative data supports this, showing a general agreement (Mean=3.19, SD=0.691) that the program positively impacts the overall well-being of police officers. However, the effectiveness of the program is closely tied to the support it receives from organizational leadership.

These responses highlight a critical gap in leadership engagement and organizational backing, suggesting that the program's effectiveness could be significantly improved by cultivating a supportive culture where mental health is a priority. Effective implementation would benefit leaders who not only promote mental health initiatives but also actively participate in them, thereby setting a standard for others to follow (Wu et al., 2021). Without such leadership, the program risks being perceived as a low priority, leading to inconsistent engagement and implementation among the officers. Wu et al. (2021) emphasized that organizational culture and leadership play a crucial role in the success of mental health programs.

Communication Effectiveness. Effective communication is crucial for the successful implementation of any program, especially within high-stress environments like law enforcement. For the Bantay Kaisipan program, which aims to enhance mental health awareness and support among police officers, the channels and methods used to disseminate information are key determinants of its success. Law enforcement officers often operate under intense pressure and complex schedules, making streamlined and effective communication essential for integrating additional responsibilities such as mental health programs (Santre, 2024). Understanding how these communication strategies are perceived by officers can provide valuable insights into the program's strengths and areas for improvement. This section delves into officers' perceptions of the communication channels used for

the Bantay Kaisipan program, highlighting both the positive impacts and the challenges encountered. The analysis is structured around two key subthemes: “Positive Impact and Clear Communication” and “Barriers and Engagement Gaps”.

Clear Communication System. Many police officers perceive the communication channels used to share information about the Bantay Kaisipan program as effective and beneficial. Responses highlight how structured and clear dissemination methods, such as letter orders, group chats, and daily briefings, contribute to the program’s success in reaching and engaging officers. For instance, Participant 2 noted the efficiency of communication through “letter orders given or disseminated,” which ensures that information is shared systematically and effectively. Similarly, Participant 13 emphasized the role of group chats and daily accounting sessions in keeping officers informed and engaged.

“It is disseminated through group chats and during daily accounting of personnel. The challenge here is that some officers do not read the [information] in the group chats. (P12)”

Participant 13 highlighted that challenges in communication often occur when the other police personnel are not active in viewing new messages from their group chats. On the other hand, the program's ability to foster dialogue and awareness about mental health issues is underscored by several officers.

“For me, it is very effective, similar to my answer in Q1, we human beings have a different way of thinking, different principles, cultures, and traditions but with the help of Bantay Kaisipan, we can dialogue with that matter through the proper way and aspect of the said program. (P1)”

Participant 1 remarked on the program's effectiveness in enabling dialogue through the proper way and aspect of the program, reflecting its role in encouraging open communication about mental health. The structured nature of these communication methods helps officers integrate the program's principles into their daily routines, promoting a culture of mental health awareness within the force. Additionally, officers appreciate the regular reinforcement of the program's objectives.

“A continuous campaign to the program is likely one thing regardless of what platform can be [used] to share this program to always remind the objectives of the campaign and serve its purpose. (P5).”

Participant 5 suggested that a continuous campaign using various platforms is crucial to remind officers of the program's goals and maintain its visibility. This continuous engagement through diverse communication channels ensures that the program remains a priority and helps embed its principles into the organizational culture.

The quantitative data supports this, showing that respondents generally agree (Mean=3.22, SD=0.612) that the communication regarding the program is clear and effective, indicating that the structured communication methods are appreciated by most officers.

Engagement Gaps. Despite the generally positive feedback, some officers identified significant challenges and gaps in the effectiveness of communication channels. These issues often stem from inconsistent engagement and competing priorities among officers. For example, Participant 8 pointed out the difficulties in ensuring smooth communication between police officers and mental health professionals, especially in crisis situations where quick, coordinated responses are needed.

“Ensuring smooth communication between police officers and mental health professionals can be challenging, especially in crisis situations where quick, coordinated responses are needed. The gap is that some officers might not fully engage with or prioritize the program due to other pressing responsibilities or a lack of understanding of its importance. (P8).”

This indicates that the complexity of police work can sometimes overshadow the engagement with mental health initiatives. Participant 13 also highlighted a specific challenge with infor-

mation dissemination through group chats, where some officers may not read or act on the messages. This gap suggests that not all communication methods are equally effective for every officer, and there may be a need for more tailored approaches to ensure full engagement. Furthermore, Participant 9 expressed skepticism about the overall effectiveness of the program's communication efforts, noting that despite the communication channels, some officers still struggle with unresolved personal issues

“I find the Bantay Kaisipan not so effective for there are still police officers passed this Bantay Kaisipan program yet, in reality, they have still emotional or other problems in life. (P9)”

This highlights a potential gap between the dissemination of information and the actual impact on officers' mental health, suggesting that communication strategies alone may not be sufficient to address deeper, underlying issues.

The quantitative data corroborates these concerns, showing that while respondents agree that the communication is generally clear, there is some variability (Mean=3.00, SD=0.732) in engagement and perceived effectiveness of the program. This suggests that while the communication methods are well-structured, there are challenges in ensuring consistent engagement and impact.

Thus, the effectiveness of communication channels in disseminating information about the Bantay Kaisipan program among police officers presents a complex picture. On one hand, many officers find the channels to be clear, systematic, and effective in promoting mental health awareness and facilitating support, as reflected in responses highlighting the program's role in fostering dialogue and monitoring mental health. On the other hand, challenges persist in ensuring consistent engagement and overcoming the barriers posed by officers' competing duties and varying levels of prioritization of the program. These insights point to the need for enhanced strategies to not only maintain clear and structured communication but also to address engagement barriers and ensure that all officers are consistently and effectively reached by the program's messaging.

The mixed perceptions of the Bantay Kaisipan program's communication effectiveness suggest that while the existing channels are broadly successful, there is room for improvement in addressing the gaps and challenges identified by officers. To support this, the article by PowerDMS (2021), found that effective communication in law enforcement is crucial for program success, particularly in high-stress environments where clear, concise, and empathetic communication can significantly enhance engagement and outcomes. These findings imply that the program could benefit from more engagement strategies and targeted efforts to ensure that all officers, regardless of their duties and schedules, remain informed and active participants in mental health initiatives.

Barriers to Implementation

Effective implementation of mental health programs like Bantay Kaisipan within law enforcement is essential but often challenging. Understanding the obstacles faced by police officers can provide crucial insights into how these programs can be better integrated and supported. The participants' responses reveal various barriers to following the guidelines and achieving the program's objectives. This section explores these obstacles, categorized into four key subthemes: Stigma and Cultural Resistance, Workload and Time Constraints, Lack of Awareness and Training, and Inadequate Evaluation and Feedback Mechanisms. By examining these challenges, we can identify the critical factors that hinder the program's success and develop strategies to overcome them.

Stigma and Cultural Resistance. A major barrier within law enforcement is the stigma surrounding mental health issues. Officers often adhere to a culture valuing toughness and self-reliance, where acknowledging mental health concerns may be viewed as a sign of weakness rather than seeking necessary support (Grupe, 2023). Participant 5 emphasized how this cultural stigma leads to low participation rates and underreporting of mental health issues among officers.

“[The] cultural stigma in which many officers adhered to a culture of toughness and self-reliance, believing that acknowledging mental health issues was a sign of weakness. This cultural stigma led to low participation rates and underreporting of mental health concerns. With this, the challenge here is changing this culture and encouraging officers to view mental health care as a strength rather than a vulnerability that requires substantial effort. (P5)”

This stigma fosters an environment where mental health programs like Bantay Kaisipan are not fully embraced, as officers may fear judgment or negative impacts on their careers. Thus, addressing stigma and cultural resistance is crucial for the successful implementation of mental health programs in police forces. This requires a cultural shift that redefines strength and resilience to include mental well-being. Moreover, Participant 13 also noted that fear of being judged or perceived as vulnerable can prevent officers from seeking help or participating fully in the program. This cultural resistance hampers the program’s ability to support officers effectively, as it discourages open engagement with mental health resources.

The quantitative results indicate that 68% of respondents agree or strongly agree that stigma and cultural norms hinder participation in mental health programs (Mean=3.7, SD=0.8), supporting the qualitative findings that highlight the pervasive nature of these barriers.

A study by Burns and Buchanan (2020) found that stigma and cultural norms within police forces significantly hinder the adoption of mental health initiatives. They highlighted that many officers avoid engaging with mental health resources due to fears of being perceived as weak or unfit for duty. This aligns with the feedback from officers involved in the Bantay Kaisipan program, highlighting the need for cultural change within law enforcement to support mental health initiatives effectively.

Workload and Time Constraints. The demanding nature of police work presents another formidable barrier to implementing programs like Bantay Kaisipan. Officers often face hectic schedules and heavy workloads that leave little time for additional responsibilities. Participant 6 noted how these workload and time constraints hinder officers from fully engaging with the program.

“One factor that contributes to PNP personnel's resistance to following guidelines outlined in the Bantay Kaisipan program is workload and time constraints, police officer often has demanding schedules and heavy workloads, which can make communications more reliable and persuasive. (P6)”

Thus, to overcome the barrier of workload and time constraints, the Bantay Kaisipan program must be designed to fit seamlessly into the daily routines of police officers. This could involve integrating program activities into existing workflows or providing flexible scheduling options that accommodate officers’ demanding schedules. On the other hand, Participant 12 emphasized the physical and mental exhaustion resulting from their duties, which limits their capacity to comply fully with the program’s requirements.

“Our limited physical capabilities as human beings [are] a big barrier to the effectiveness of the program and the load of work; we are handling from our day-to-day routine. These barriers minimize the effectiveness and success of the program due to the exhausted and polluted minds of police officers. (P12)”

These time pressures mean that without flexible and integrative approaches, officers might struggle to find the time and energy to participate in the program’s activities. Leadership can support this by recognizing the pressures officers face and adjusting workloads to ensure that participation in the program is manageable. Additionally, streamlining communication and making resources easily accessible during brief moments of downtime can help officers engage with the program without

adding to their stress. Effective time management strategies and organizational support are key to making the program a sustainable part of officers' professional lives.

Similarly, 72% of respondents cited workload and time constraints as a major barrier (Mean=3.8, SD=0.7), echoing the participants' concerns about their demanding schedules and limited capacity to engage with the program.

The study by Demou et al. (2020) highlights that police officers often face overwhelming workloads and time constraints, which may impede their ability to participate in additional programs. Their findings suggest that successful implementation of mental health programs in law enforcement requires accommodations for the demanding schedules and workload pressures officers face daily.

Lack of Awareness and Training. A significant barrier to the successful implementation of the Bantay Kaisipan program is the lack of awareness and training among officers regarding the program's importance and methods. Without adequate training, officers may not understand how to implement the guidelines or appreciate the benefits of the program. Participant 8 underscored the necessity for proper training to ensure that officers can effectively engage with the program.

“If officers are not adequately trained on the importance and methods of the Bantay Kaisipan, they might not understand how to effectively implement its guidelines. (P8)”

This implies that without continuous education and reinforcement, the relevance and value of the initiative may not be fully realized by the officers. This lack of understanding can lead to low engagement and poor integration of the program's practices into their daily routines. Thus, enhancing awareness and providing comprehensive training is critical for the successful adoption of the Bantay Kaisipan program. This includes initial training sessions that communicate the program's objectives, benefits, and practical implementation steps, as well as ongoing education to reinforce these concepts. Training should be designed to be accessible and relevant, demonstrating how the program can directly benefit officers in their roles. Leadership should also be involved in promoting the program and ensuring that it is integrated into the broader training and development initiatives within the police force. Regular updates and refresher sessions can help maintain high levels of engagement and ensure that the program's practices are consistently applied.

The survey data show that 65% of respondents felt that inadequate training and lack of awareness significantly impact the program's effectiveness (Mean=3.6, SD=0.9), which aligns with the qualitative insights emphasizing the need for comprehensive training and continuous education.

According to Santre (2024), insufficient training and lack of awareness about mental health programs are major obstacles in law enforcement settings. This study emphasizes that continuous education and proper training are critical for officers to understand and value the importance of mental health initiatives.

Inadequate Evaluation and Feedback Mechanisms. Effective evaluation and feedback mechanisms are essential for assessing the success of the Bantay Kaisipan program and identifying areas for improvement. Participant 5 highlighted challenges in collecting comprehensive data on mental health outcomes and program participation due to privacy concerns and logistical issues.

“Insufficient Data Collection, collecting comprehensive data on mental health outcomes and program participation can be difficult due to privacy concerns, logistical issues, or lack of infrastructure. Because of this, incomplete or inaccurate data hampers the ability to perform thorough evaluations and make evidence-based adjustments to the program. (P5)”

Establishing comprehensive and standardized evaluation and feedback mechanisms is crucial for the continuous improvement of the Bantay Kaisipan program. This involves developing clear metrics and data collection processes that respect officers' privacy while providing meaningful in-

sights into the program's impact. Regular evaluations should be conducted to assess the program's effectiveness and identify areas for adjustment. On the other hand, Participant 8 highlighted the difficulty in establishing clear, standardized metrics to measure the program's effectiveness, which can lead to inconsistent evaluations.

“Establishing clear, standardized metrics to measure the program's effectiveness can be challenging. Without consistent criteria, evaluations can be subjective and inconsistent. The impact of this is the absence of standardized metrics makes it difficult to compare results overtime or across different regions, leading to ambiguous conclusions about the program protocols. (P8)”

Thus, without complex and regular evaluation processes, it is challenging to adjust the program based on feedback and ensure it meets the evolving needs of the officers. Feedback from officers is also vital, as it provides a direct perspective on the program's strengths and weaknesses. Leadership should prioritize creating an environment where feedback is encouraged and valued, and ensure that the insights gained from evaluations are used to make evidence-based adjustments to the program.

The survey results showed that 60% of respondents agreed that insufficient evaluation and feedback mechanisms are a barrier to the program's success (Mean=3.5, SD=0.8), reinforcing the qualitative findings on the importance of developing clear metrics and regular assessments.

To support this finding, a study by Arjmand et al. (2024) discusses the importance of structured evaluation and feedback mechanisms for mental health programs in police settings. They found that clear metrics and regular assessments are essential for adapting mental health initiatives to the needs of officers and ensuring their ongoing effectiveness.

Further, the findings from this study reveal significant insights into the effectiveness of the Bantay Kaisipan Program, informed by the Stress Process Model and the Job Demand-Control-Support (JDCS) Model.

The Stress Process Model provided a framework for understanding how job-related stressors impact officers' mental health. The study's results indicated that the program effectively addressed primary stressors, such as job-related trauma, and secondary stressors, including cognitive appraisal and coping strategies. The moderate to high levels of awareness and improved coping mechanisms observed among officers align with the model's expectations, suggesting that the program successfully mitigates the negative effects of stress through enhanced awareness and support.

The JDCS Model offered valuable insights into the relationship between job demands, control, and support. The program's integration into daily routines and the observed positive impact on mental well-being reflect the model's principles. High job demands and limited control were noted as stress contributors, but the program's support mechanisms appear to have alleviated these issues to some extent. This supports the JDCS Model's assertion that organizational support and control over tasks are crucial for reducing stress and improving mental health outcomes.

Overall, the study's findings contribute to the theoretical understanding of stress management in law enforcement. They highlight the importance of addressing both job demands and organizational support to enhance mental well-being. Future research should continue to explore these theoretical perspectives to refine and improve mental health programs for police officers.

Conclusions

This study aimed to assess the awareness, implementation, attainment, and challenges associated with the Bantay Kaisipan Program among police officers in a highly urbanized city, providing insights into its effectiveness and areas for improvement within the Philippine National Police (PNP).

The findings from the quantitative phase indicated a generally positive reception and understanding of the Bantay Kaisipan Program among police officers. Participants demonstrated moderate to high levels of awareness regarding the program's objectives, activities, and its impact on mental health awareness and officer well-being. This suggests that the program has succeeded in establishing itself as a recognized initiative within the PNP, contributing to enhanced awareness and understanding of mental health issues among its personnel.

In terms of implementation, the study revealed that the Bantay Kaisipan Program has been largely integrated into daily police operations in the city. Officers reported active participation in program activities, adherence to guidelines, and recognition of its positive impact on their mental well-being and operational effectiveness. Despite these successes, challenges such as time constraints, inadequate training, and communication gaps were identified, highlighting areas where targeted improvements are necessary to optimize program implementation across all levels of the PNP.

Regarding the attainment of the program's objectives, the study found positive outcomes related to increased awareness of mental health issues, improved coping mechanisms among officers, and a more supportive organizational culture regarding mental health. These achievements underscore the program's potential to foster resilience and well-being among police personnel, contributing to a healthier work environment.

Qualitative insights further illuminated integration challenges, communication effectiveness issues, and persistent barriers to implementation, such as stigma surrounding mental health and workload pressures. These qualitative findings provide a complex understanding of the socio-cultural and operational contexts that impact the successful implementation of mental health initiatives within law enforcement settings.

In summary, while the Bantay Kaisipan Program has made significant strides in enhancing mental health awareness and support among police officers in the city, there is room for improvement. Addressing identified challenges through targeted strategies, including enhanced training, improved communication channels, and organizational support, will be crucial in ensuring the program's sustainability and maximizing its impact across the broader PNP.

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