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Impact of Feedback Dimensions on Police Officers' Performance in Crime Reduction and Security System in the Province of Laguna, Philippines: The Case of Laguna Provincial Police Office

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Abstract

This quantitative study sought to determine the impact of feedback dimensions on police officers' performance in crime reduction and security system in Laguna, Philippines. Survey questionnaire served as the primary research instrument. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentages, regression using dummy variables, and supplementary details from KII. Findings of this research could provide guidelines for the LPPO in planning the organization's program for crime reduction and enhancement of security system. The consistent practice of feedback exchange among police officers to increase crime solution efficiency in Laguna is recommended.

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1. Background and rationale of the study

Philippine crime rate, in a span of nine years, had constantly increased from a 98.0 percentage of incidences in 2001 to a 267.5 percentage in the year 2010 (National Statistical Coordination Board, 2013). According to NSCB (2013), out of the total crimes during those periods there were 169.9 index crimes and 97.6 non-index crimes by the

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year 2010. With the rising occasion of crime incidence, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (2011) showed a decrease in number of persons arrested for drug-related violations.

However, the 2011-2012 comparative review of PNP-CALABARZON reported a sudden change in trend, following a decrease in crime statistics in the region. A total crime volume of 23, 330 incidences in 2001 was reduced to 19, 894 incidences by the year 2012. In CALABARZON, cases such as homicide, physical injury, robbery, theft, “car napping” and cattle rustling were also cut down. Despite the clear-cut of crime rate trend of the region, Laguna holds the largest crime volume with 5, 888 incidents among other provinces in CALABARZON (www.pnpcalabarzon.gov, 2012). But in terms of its performance, Laguna exhibits of 74.9 per cent crime clearance efficiency (CCE), the highest in the region with 4, 411 solved cases out of 5, 888 incidents.

In a broader aspect of these statistics comes the structure of an organization. Police office is one kind of organization which requires the use of communication. Organizational communication enters the field which discusses concepts, processes, and theories on how communication affects an organization.

There are a lot of factors that can affect the performance of an organization. One major factor that constitutes to the organization is the role of communication. Under this concept are the different aspects that can be seen as contributors to an organization’s performance and system. One of the most significant elements of communication that influences the result of an organization’s performance is feedback. According to Miller (1995), feedback contributes to putting the the organization ‘back on track’ by adopting behaviors more relevant to its goals. Moreover, this communication factor has an effect on the performance of a member in an organization (Miller, 1995).

Thus, in order for feedback to have a positive effect on the organization, as well having a good communication cycle, feedback dimensions such as valence, timeliness, specificity, frequency, and sensitivity can be the basis of the organization’s way of feedback exchange. These criteria will serve as the system’s source of further enhancing and troubleshooting the problem inside the organization. It can lead to better service of the organization’s stakeholders and to attaining organizational goals more efficiently. This study can also contribute to the peace-building and improved crime and security system in the province of Laguna and in the country.

2. Feedback dimensions as a key to an effective organization

Miller (2005) explained that organizational communication employs the systems approach in communication. It follows the cybernetic perspective of communication. This kind of view has a significant element of feedback. Feedback system has feedback dimensions that determine the characteristics or status of feedback in an organization.

Cusella quoted by Miller (2005) explained how feedback dimensions contribute to an effective organization. Such dimensions are valence, timeliness, specificity, frequency, and sensitivity.

Valence refers to the positivity or negativity of feedback message. Positive feedback is composed of messages that imply the acceptance of behavior which directs the good performance of the individual. Negative feedback, on the contrary, signifies messages that are unacceptable to the recipient’s behavior which shows poor performance.

Timeliness determines how the feedback is quickly or slowly transferred from source to the recipient. It may affect the immediacy of the transfer of feedback messages. Thirdly, specificity is about the level of detail composed in the feedback messages. The fourth dimension is frequency which talks about the number of times the feedback messages is conveyed. This will indicate how actively the individuals of the group are communicating. Lastly, sensitivity represents how the source of the feedback is sensitive in terms of recipient’s feelings when exchanging the messages (Miller, 2005).

Brookhart (2008) discussed a lighter example of the feedback dimensions in which she relates it in a classroom setting and not in a formal organization. For timeliness, the purposes of the immediacy of feedback in students are for them to get feedback while the knowledge is still fresh in in their minds, and for them to get feedback while they have still chance or time to correct or improve their academic performance.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design

The study employed quantitative survey research design. Quantitative study involves statistical analysis which measures different parameters. In this study, feedback dimensions were measured to determine the impact of the feedback characteristics to the respondents' performance. This method tested the theoretical assumptions of the study.

3.2. Research method

Self-administered questionnaire was used as the research method. The questionnaire was classified into different parts. The first part of the questionnaire was about the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. The second part comprised the information about the nature of communication of their organization and its structure. Third part of the questionnaire comprised questions about how the feedback communication affected their performance at work and on meeting their goals about crime reduction and security system. Next part focused on the strength and weaknesses of feedback communication that serves as a supporting factor. The last part provided questions that answered the primary goal of the study which was to determine the degree of feedback dimensions in the organization. Likert scale was used in the questionnaire for analysis. Data about the police performance on crime reduction and security system was from the Communications and Investigations Department of LPPO.

3.3. Data analysis

Statistical analysis was employed in analyzing the data of the study. Descriptive statistics specifically regression with dummy variables was measured to determine whether the feedback dimensions of the organization's feedback exchange had an impact on police officers' performance in crime reduction and security system. Partial eta squared, predicted effect, and percent change were used to measure the association of the feedback dimensions, the level of increase or decrease of each feedback dimension to the crime statistics of Laguna. Frequencies, means, and percentages were also part of the statistical analysis of the study since the respondents are completely enumerated.

4. Primary results and discussions

In the table below (Table 1), results of the feedback dimensions are presented. Its predicted effect of the feedback dimensions on the crime statistics of Laguna and percent change on crime statistics based from the dummy variables. Intercept is the basis for every change in each dummy variable (feedback dimensions).

In valence, when the respondents stated that the feedback, whether positive or negative were fully accepted in the organization, it resulted to a predicted effect of 30.69 increase in crime rate from the intercept value of 18.19. Valence D variable may not have been relevant enough since the expected result should be the decrease of the crime rate. Moreover, Police chiefs who agreed that they immediately relayed their opinions, suggestions, and views resulted to an addition of 1.86 percent change to the crime rate from intercept value. This may explain that sometimes, immediacy of feedback messages can negatively affect the crime solution system of Laguna. When the immediacy of feedback relay is balanced, a decrease of 19.91 crime rate would be observed from the intercept value of 18.19.

On the specificity aspect of feedback, the police chiefs who agreed that they did not clearly discuss the points or even the smallest details to the team resulted to an increase of 2.99 in crime rate from 18.19 intercept value. The predicted effect based on the respondents' answer that they remain neutral on the level of specificity of feedback messages in the organization revealed a 38.04 addition to the 18.19 intercept. There was a 63.20 increase from the value of intercept regarding the disagreement of the respondents that they clearly discuss the points and details in the organization. However, the police chiefs' strong disagreement towards not discussing every detail of topics, issues, or concerns revealed a significant decrease of 53.22 in crime rate from the intercept value of 18.19. This could have meant that discussing every smallest detail regarding concerns and issues would have greatly contributed to a high

value of crime reduction in Laguna. In frequency of feedback, the respondents agreed that they always conducted meetings before and after operation in which they usually exchanged comments, opinions, and suggestions. Their response resulted to a predicted outcome of a 26.67 decrease from the intercept value. This may imply that frequent feedback exchange was a positive way to reduce crime incidences in Laguna.

In the last factor which was sensitivity, the respondents' agreement that they were open in giving and receiving tough opinions and views without easily getting pressured or irritated, lead to a slight increase of 3.02 from the intercept value. This explained that heating the conversations up can also be a positive factor to let out all the opinions and suggestions that will further improve crime reduction rate. The police chiefs who answered neutrally in the statement resulted to a 26.74 decrease in crime incidence from the 18.19 intercept. Having a balanced way of treating feedback exchange could help in having a high rate of crime solution efficiency.

As a whole, table 1 shows the value of feedback dimensions' change and its predicted effect on the crime statistics in Laguna, considering that they were simultaneously being practiced in the organization. Based on the answers of the respondents and the LPPO's 2012 and 2013 crime statistics, the percent change and predicted effect were measured. Some feedback dimensions had a huge impact but some were not much relevant. Still, it became beneficial to the organization to measure their degree of feedback exchange to know whether it can help the police office or not through the use of feedback communication.

Table 1. Predicted effect with dummy variables of feedback dimensions based on the police chiefs' response and LPPO's 2012 and 2013 crime statistics

Parameter Estimates					
Variable	DF	Parameter Estimate	Standard Error	t Value	Pr > t
Intercept	1	18.19172	25.97605	0.70	0.4927
Valence NAD	1	1.22880	23.35200	0.05	0.9586
Valence D	1	30.69093	44.30179	0.69	0.4973
Timeliness A	1	1.86442	32.31606	0.06	0.9546
Timeliness NAD	1	-19.91448	58.81712	-0.34	0.7388
Specificity A	1	2.99139	33.13347	0.09	0.9291
Specificity NAD	1	38.04153	33.19069	1.15	0.2667
Specificity D	1	63.19872	49.42886	1.28	0.2173
Specificity SD	1	-53.21620	67.13481	-0.79	0.4383
Frequency A	1	-26.67000	46.64708	-0.57	0.5746
Sensitivity A	1	3.02177	33.43095	0.09	0.9290
Sensitivity NAD	1	-26.73901	50.74408	-0.53	0.6047

5. Conclusions and recommendations

The five feedbacks dimensions whether present or not can create impact on the police officers' performance in crime reduction and security system in Laguna. Positivity or negativity of feedback was not really a relevant factor to the crime reduction and security system of Laguna. Immediacy of relaying feedback should be balanced to contribute in crime solution efficiency. Tackling the smallest detail of topics and issues were needed for reducing crimes in Laguna. It was effective for the organization to have frequent feedback exchange which resulted to lower percentage of crimes. Police officers who were not too sensitive or too superficial in feedback exchange helped in improving crime solution in Laguna.

Strengths and weaknesses of feedback communication in the organization play an essential part in improving the status of the LPPO. Strengths of the organization's feedback communication were the conduct of meetings, provision of evaluation, presence of technological advancements, team-building activities, and harmonious relationship among members. Weaknesses were face-to-face communication, rank or position in LPPO, and non-verbal indicators.

There are existing factors in the organization which affects how they communicate and exchange feedback.

Some well-defined factors were present flaws or problems in operation planning, perception that suggestions and comments as great contribution to the better performance of the police office and services, and frequent receiving of comments and opinions from other officers. Factors that least influence the respondents' feedback communication were environment where feedback is communicated, perception that giving comments to authorities are disrespectful, type of conversation (casual talks and meetings), and level of relationship between police officers. Having an authoritative organizational structure yet open communication flow among members of the organization helps in engaging on feedback communication.

After conducting the study on feedback dimensions and its impact on police officers' performance in crime reduction and security systems in Laguna, there are some recommendations for future studies. First, the same objectives to conduct a study in other provinces like the Mindanao region can be considered since military service is prevalent and prioritized in the area. Second, the relationship of feedback dimensions to the stakeholders (community) served by the police organization can also be taken into account. Third, respondents which include police officers not of considerable rank may be included in the sample to test for organizational position as a factor affecting communication. Lastly, combination of quantitative and qualitative approach may be employed.

For Laguna Provincial Police Office, the findings of the study may be used to consider the communication aspect of the organization as primary tool in solving crimes and improving security system. Sustaining the good status of feedback communication in the organization is needed to continue increasing crime solution efficiency of Laguna.

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