

WONDER WOMAN: WOMEN IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

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ABSTRACT : This paper examined women's experiences and perceptions of women in law enforcement in Davao City. A non-probability purposive sampling technique was used in the study's online questionnaire to the respondents and in surveying the target number of respondents. There are two hundred (200) respondents to this study, and the respondents are women in law enforcement in Davao City. The researchers also included wonder woman which symbolizes how women lead, value justice, and empower women. The findings of this study revealed that the level of perception of women in law enforcement is often manifested. In addition, there is no statistically significant difference between the indicators and the profile of the respondents. The Feminist theory by Wollstonecraft in 1972 anchored the study which promotes the individualism and self-development of all women. Therefore, women achieved greater opportunities even in a male-dominated workplace also, the researchers concluded that women in law enforcement give more opportunities to the next generation of female officers. The researchers recommend that the Philippine National Police should support women's advancement and mentoring programs to further enhance the leadership role of every woman in the law enforcement field.

KEYWORDS: *descriptive survey method, feminism, feminist theory, law enforcement, wonder woman, women.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Now more than ever, more women are working for police departments. Since they were originally employed as police matrons in the late 1800s and early 1900s, their functions and experiences at work have undergone major changes. Concerns about their safety and the safety of their coworkers arose as women started to leave their specialized professions in the late 1960s to become patrol police. This shift in their position raised concerns about how their policing methods would differ from those of men and whether they might affect the makeup of the police force (Archbold, 2012). In accordance with our study, an essay by Megaessay.com said that superheroes dedicate their entire lives to preventing crime and maintaining public safety. They are amazing humans because they always put others before themselves and put their lives in danger to assist those who are in need.

Wonder Woman is the epitome of female strength and power. She has gained the respect of both men and women all over the world because she is as courageous and strong as any man; she also shows how the fairer sex can break free from their traditional roles. The advancement of women through the ranks has lagged. In large police agencies, sworn women currently hold only 7.3 percent of top command positions (chiefs, assistant chiefs, commanders, and captains), 9.6 percent of supervisory positions (lieutenants and sergeants), and 13.5 percent of line operation positions (detectives and patrol officers), according to statistics from the National Center for Women and Policing in 2002 (Archbold, 2012). In a recent study in 2021, following the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy, the UN has committed to hiring female police officers both on-site and at UN headquarters. The initiative is to ensure that at least 30% of individual police officers (IPOs), and 20% of constituted police departments are female. By 2028, there will be 35 percent more police officers working at UN headquarters and in field police units or FPUs (Kumalo, 2021). More than a century ago, the battle for women's rights and gender equality first started. An international movement called gender equality aims to give women's jobs more respect (Wilson, 2016).

It was now possible to study female police officers' experiences because they were more prevalent in the legal profession. Heidensohn (2015) notes that in times of crisis, the police frequently turn to women as "a desperate remedy" because they serve as an antidote to corruption by exhibiting a more compassionate and ethical aspect of policing. In the context of Latin America particularly in Buenos Aires, there is a deficit of studies on female police officers. The topic of women's police stations comes up most frequently when talking

about female police officers. These outlets provide information and services geared specifically toward the needs of women, such as assistance in cases of domestic and sexual assault and abuse. Since the first station of this kind was launched in Brazil in 1985, others have appeared in Argentina, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and Peru (Ellsberg et al., 2015). These stations serve as a gateway for women seeking specialized services and entry into the legal system. According to the study by Redmond (2022), police officers show a high degree of loyalty to the members of their professional families despite the tough and dangerous nature of their work.

Despite getting training on how to avoid such a poisonous workplace, some officers continue to act improperly while on the job. This means that the professional environment they operate in encourages officers to show devotion to the organization by remaining silent. Other officers who are aware of the harassment are hesitant to speak up. It is also added that soft skills, such as communicating effectively and compassion, are becoming more vital in the profession, and this is an area where women may have an advantage over their work peers. The culture of policing has shifted to a more prevalent community-based style. A study also stated that in an era of declining police legitimacy, women are regularly recognized as trustworthy by their communities and, more crucially, are driven to serve communities. Women also possess excellent interpersonal communication skills, which transfer into more efficient procedures in the field (The International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2022).

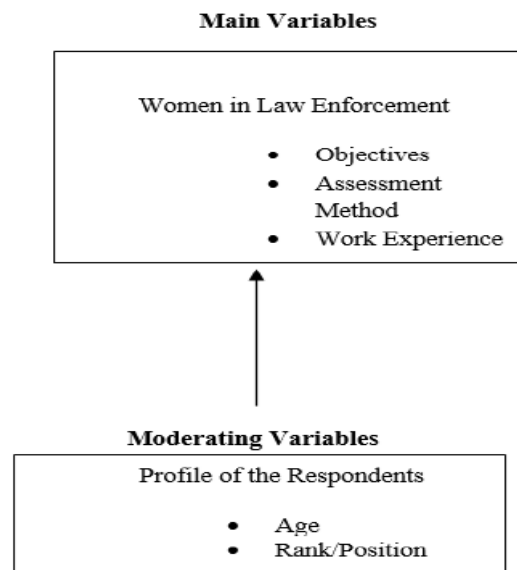
This means that they have a positive influence about job performance, fairness of police agencies, and trustworthiness and perhaps increase the willingness of the public in the production of positive public outcomes. Caliwán (2020) revealed that the empowerment of women would encourage them to be independent, boost their self-esteem, and generate confidence as they face difficult situations related to policing. This means that women have been given a chance to showcase their abilities and capabilities in their line of work. A rising appreciation of some particular and important professional skills that women frequently offer to law enforcement is one of the factors driving the encouraging trend toward building a more balanced public safety force. These characteristics are thought to improve law enforcement organizations' capacity to have a good influence on the communities they serve. (Fritzvold, 2022).

The study by Lopez (2018) added that females are only hired based on the "necessities" of a specific police station, which sometimes means that they need more people to do the administrative work. This means that gender does not matter because women belong in this organization. The presumption on this matter is that anything a man can do, a woman can do as well. An island in the Philippines located at Maria, Siquijor was designated as the first all-women police station of the Philippines National Police. This was launched to promote women's empowerment to enhance women's tactical skills. Maria Police Station has placed first among the six district stations on several important performance criteria since the commencement of the all-women personnel paradigm. The all-women station was recognized by the provincial police chief for enforcing traffic safety laws more seriously than mixed-gender stations with a majority of men. The reflection of the valuable insights from Maria Police Station gives important lessons in the pursuit of women's empowerment and gender equality in law enforcement agencies. (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2020)

This study is anchored on the Feminist Theory of Wollstonecraft (1972), which provides a framework that allows for consideration of unique social practices and life experiences of women. Feminism is a positive movement that contributes to bringing social change to society. It is not compromising to both genders, but a concept for equality. It also proves a point in law enforcement that feminism lifts women to the same level as men. People have the impression that feminism promotes women above men, genders are far from equal, and not everyone receives equal opportunities and rights, but it is not about that. Feminism intends to have equality for all genders. It indicates in this theory that feminism, simply put, is the belief in the economic, political, and social equality of genders. The theory approach to women in law enforcement is where women show equality, empowerment, and dignity in their profession. It also focuses on the social, emotional, biological, and psychological encounters of women and society and is female-centered in three primary ways.

First, the inquiry starts with the experiences of women in society. Second, women are the central focus of the theory, and lastly, it is critical to producing "a better world for women." This theory was created to make women's concerns more visible and worked to promote the individualism and self-development of all women. Using this theory allows us to view women in law enforcement challenges from a holistic and historical perspective. Figure 1 presents the variable of the study. The single-headed arrow pointing to the main variable (Perception of Women in Law Enforcement in Davao City) influences the moderator variables (profile of the respondents) or the indicators (objectives, assessment method, work experience). On the other hand, the profile of the respondents is as follows; Age, which determines their experiences in the years that have passed including the present, and rank/position that states their status as either commission or non-commission officers.

Furthermore, the formulated null hypothesis was tested at the level of significance of 0.05 which states that there is no significant difference between the three indicators and the profile of the respondents in terms of age and rank/position.



This study aims to determine the perception of women working in law enforcement in Davao City. Specifically, it reveals that matters in connection to the promotion, experience, and empowerment of women in law enforcement. The hypothesis is that there is no significant difference between the three indicators and the profile of the respondents in terms of age and rank/position. This study provides essential data about the topic at hand. The result benefits the students and professors. The findings provide information about perceptions of women working in law enforcement. Moreover, to empower women in our society and to support feminism. For criminology practitioners, this study allows them to have a better reality based on information about the perception of women in law enforcement and work towards a common good for the improvement of the living conditions of society. For the law enforcers, this study may help them as a basis for evaluating their perceptions of women working in law enforcement. For the women police officers, this study is beneficial for them as it helps them to gain self-esteem and stand their position in their career. The contents of this study would be beneficial to other researchers as it would help them to add information related to the perception of women in law enforcement. This research can be used as a basis for women conquering man-dominated fields and filling the top positions as women working in law enforcement.

II. METHODS

The researcher presents the research design, the respondents, the sampling design, the research instruments, the data-gathering procedure, and the statistical tools used in the study.

Research SubjectsThe participants of the study were female police officers in Davao City. The total number of participants required was 400 police officers and only 200 participants responded to our survey questionnaires. The sampling technique used by the researchers to select the number of respondents is a non-probability purposive sampling technique. The researchers used the Raosof application to compute the population size, then 200 respondents were recommended by Raosof as our sample size.

Research InstrumentsThe researchers adopted a standardized questionnaire, the Likert scale questionnaire on gender discrimination from Hassan, 2012. This was answered by women police officers with the assistance of the researchers. After that, the survey questionnaire was submitted to the validators for the evaluation of the perception of women police officers working in law enforcement. In answering the survey, a five-point Likert scale guided the respondents in their choices. The scale measured the respondent's degree of agreement in every item in the questionnaire: 5 for always manifested, 4 for often manifested, 3 for sometimes manifested, 2 for seldom manifested, and 1 for never manifested.

Rating	Range of Mean	Descriptive Level	Interpretation
5	4.20-5.00	Always Manifested	Perception of Women in Law Enforcement is always manifested.
4	3.40-4.19	Often Manifested	Perception of Women in Law Enforcement is often manifested.
3	2.30-3.19	Sometimes Manifested	Perception of Women in Law Enforcement is sometimes manifested.
2	1.80-2.29	Seldom Manifested	Perception of Women in Law Enforcement is seldom manifested.

1	1.00-1.79	Never Manifested.	Perception of Women in Law Enforcement is never manifested.
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Research Design and Procedure The researchers utilized the Descriptive Survey method of research. The descriptive survey design was created to gather vast data from a heterogeneous audience. It aims to obtain information that describes a phenomenon, situation, or population. It also involves using different methods to analyze the variables in question (Voxco, 2021). This design is suitable for this study for its purpose is to determine the perception of female police officers about law enforcement field treatment also entering law enforcement, the policymakers, and organizations that are concerned about women in law enforcement and activities in the workplace.

In performing this survey, the researchers complied with the University's standard procedure. First, we gained permission from our research adviser and the dean of the Department of Criminology. Through a formal letter, the researchers requested authorization from the City Director of the Davao City Police Office, the agency itself gave the researchers a letter of Memorandum to Conduct of Research Study signed by the Acting Chief. The target population and sample size for administering the questionnaire was set by the researcher. The survey questionnaires were individually given by the researchers to the designated uniformed female officers of every police station from the date of August 30, 2022, to September 21, 2022. Upon completion of the questionnaire, the researchers recorded the data in Excel Spreadsheet and sent it to the statistician for analysis. The analysis of the data came next.

Statistical Treatment of Data After attaining the desired number of responses, the data was collated and tabulated by the researchers, the result was analyzed and interpreted. The statistical tools based on descriptive, which illustrates, explains and summarizes essential elements of such a dataset identified in the research. The following statistical tools were used to analyze the data: Mean was used to determine the level of perception of women in law enforcement, while Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to determine the significant difference between objectives, assessment method, work experience and the profile of the respondents specifically in terms of age. Lastly, the T-Test was used to determine the difference between the three indicators and rank.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this chapter, the findings from the data gathered are interpreted and presented by the researchers. The following subheadings serve as the basis for the results.

Demographic Profile of Respondents (n = 200)

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of women in law enforcement, where 200 respondents have been taken, based on the respondents in terms of age, rank/position.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Profile	Frequency	%
<i>Age</i>		
Below 25 years old	17	8.5
25-40 years old	147	73.5
Above 40 years old	36	18.0
<i>Rank/Position</i>		
Commissioned	6	3.0
Non-Commissioned	194	97.0

Table 1 shows that out of 200 respondents, 17 participants or 8.5% were below 25 years old. One hundred forty-seven respondents or 73.5% were 25-40 years old. Thirty-six participants or 18.0% were above 40 years old. In addition, there are 6 respondents with 3.0% commissioned officers and 194 are non-commissioned officers with 97.0%.

Level of Perception of Women in Law Enforcement by Indicators

Table 2 shows the level of perception of women in law enforcement, in terms of objectives, assessment method, and work experience. The statistical result shows that the overall mean score of the level of perception of women in law enforcement is at 3.90 or often manifested, with a standard deviation of .48.

Table 2. Level of Perception of Women in Law Enforcement by Indicators

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Objective	3.89	.77	Often Manifested
Assessment Method	3.89	.57	Often Manifested

Work Experience	3.93	.58	Often Manifested
Overall	3.90	.48	Often Manifested

Presented in Table 2 indicates that women police officers had achieved representation in law enforcement, which allowed their experiences to be studied. This means that global efforts have been made to promote awareness and equality where women's expertise is respected. They believe they are on par with, if not superior to, their male colleagues in terms of ability (Seklecki&Paynich, 2016). Women nowadays perceive that they can fit top positions in law enforcement and that their abilities are needed in the advancement of their job.

Oneway (ANOVA) Objective Assessment Work Overall by Age

Table 3 shows the Oneway ANOVA test result which determines the significant difference between the three indicators and moderating variable in terms of age.

Table 3. Oneway (ANOVA) Objective Assessment Work Overall by Age

Indicators	F-value	p-value	Interpretation
Objective	.999	.370	There is no significant difference
Assessment	4.168	.017	There is no significant difference
Work	1.68	.846	There is no significant difference
Overall	1.671	.191	There is no significant difference

Presented in Table 3 is the computed overall F- value is 1.671 with a p-value of .191. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, this indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in the level of perception of women in law enforcement in terms of Age. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected. The findings of the study show that age does not affect women working in law enforcement when getting a promotion, fringe benefits package, or advancement in the field.

T-test of Objective Assessment Word Overall by Rank

Table 4 shows the level of significant difference between the objective, assessment method, work experience, and rank of women in law enforcement using a 2-tailed test at a significant level of 0.05.

Table 4. T-test of Objective Assessment Word Overall by Rank

Indicators	T	Sig. (2-tailed)	Interpretation
Objectives	1.078	.28	There is no significant difference
Assessment	-.586	.55	There is no significant difference
Work	-.230	.818	There is no significant difference
Overall	.049	.961	There is no significant difference

The findings shown in Table 4 show that the overall significant level is .961 which is greater than 0.05. This implies that we accepted the null hypothesis. The study found that the rank of women in law enforcement was not related to the opportunities they met at the workplace, the satisfaction, and the rewards for their efforts.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section summarized the results of the study and formulated recommendations based on the data outcomes presented.

The findings of this study revealed that the perception of women in law enforcement is often manifested. This illustrates that it is often manifested that in terms of rank and age, women in law enforcement are increasing. The number of women in law enforcement presents an opportunity for their responsibilities, cultural influence, and the way police "perform justice". Women keep working towards workplace equality; by doing so, they progress in obtaining higher levels, dispel stereotypes of incompetence, and provide better chances for the next generation of female officers. (Deans, 2015).

When women participate in law enforcement, at all levels, and in all roles, law enforcement is more responsive to and reflective of, the community it serves. The meaningful participation of women in law enforcement increases operational effectiveness and enhances community trust. The overall mean of the study indicates that the respondents there is a perception of gender equality for women in law enforcement. The contents of this study would be beneficial to other researchers as it would help to add information related to gender inequality in women working in law enforcement in Davao City. This supports the theory of Mary Wollstonecraft in 1972 the Feminist theory which was created to make women's concerns more visible and worked to promote the individualism and self-development of all women. Using this theory allows viewing female police officer challenges from a holistic and historical perspective.

The accompanying recommendations are made after a comprehensive examination and evaluation of both the study's results and conclusions. The researchers highly recommend that the Philippine National Police should support women's advancement and mentoring programs to enhance the leadership role of women in law enforcement. They need to reach into spaces to connect women with mentors to help them to be successful in a system. It is also important to note the value of women officers supporting and lifting each other.

Moreover, the Philippine National Police should expand their programs that involve flexible and family-friendly policies involving women. The researchers suggest that the agencies with higher levels of procedural, distributive, and interpersonal justice should be more coherent and effective organizations. It also needs to identify the standards that promote equality and equity for both men and female employees. To future researchers, the study will help them expand and have a better understanding of gender inequality. The gathered data will help them to broaden their future study regarding this problem so they will be able to examine the diversification of future researchers' studies.

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