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## Students' Perception of the Interplay of Police Performance and Public Trust

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### ABSTRACT

Effective policing relies on public trust and support. However, trust in law enforcement has declined in many communities—police performance factors like attentiveness, reliability, and responsiveness shape levels of public trust. The researchers surveyed 300 criminology students to analyze the relationship between police performance and public trust. Criminology students were chosen as the target group because they will soon be entering the field of law enforcement. Measures included police performance dimensions and indicators of public trust (procedural justice, effectiveness, values, integrity). Students rated police performance highly, especially responsiveness. Trust indicators were also high. Police attentiveness, reliability, and responsiveness correlate strongly with procedural justice, police effectiveness, values, and integrity. Further, Multiple Regression Analysis revealed that police performance significantly predicts public trust. Based on these findings, the researchers recommend: 1) providing comprehensive training programs for police officers focusing on community policing, communication skills, de-escalation, and bias awareness; 2) establishing strict monitoring systems and adopting a zero-tolerance policy towards misconduct; 3) evaluating police performance regularly through assessments and metrics; and 4) engaging communities through partnerships, meetings, and community policing initiatives. These recommendations aim to strengthen trust-based policing and support achieving U.N. Sustainable Development Goal 16 of encouraging peaceful and inclusive communities, ensuring equal access to justice for everyone, and constructing efficient, responsible, and inclusive organizations at every level.

### INTRODUCTION

Strong public trust is vital for societies' proper functioning and success. Trust represents people's unreserved belief that those in positions of power, such as institutions, governmental authorities, and systems that govern society, will operate in a manner that looks out for everyone's overall welfare and interests (United Nations, 2021). A higher trust indicates more positive views of the police and greater public trust, while lower scores suggest an erosion of trust and confidence (OECD, 2021). This bedrock of trust forms harmonious relationships between citizens and their government, corporations, media, and other vital entities; that is why public trust must stay within an acceptable/satisfactory standard. Trust also comes with the public having certain expectations regarding what the government will or will not do. When their performance falls below these expectations, it can result in negative emotions, perceptions, or even retaliatory actions (Chan, 2018). In such democratic states, its citizens perceive the police based on their level of trust (Lum & Nagin, 2017). Gaining the trust and confidence of the public that the police serve is essential for law enforcement to do their job successfully. Therefore, having trust in the police and seeing them as legitimate authorities is crucial in enabling the community to work with officers to address crimes and keep neighborhoods safe (U.S. DOJ, n.d). Maintaining the community's safety, gaining their people's confidence, and preventing and solving crimes are all made possible by police who faithfully carry out their

tasks. But, when police overstep their bounds, they injure people, society, and liberties significantly (Prius, 2022). In 2016, a survey by the Social Weather Stations (2016) put the public's trust rating of the police at 47.5 percent, three points lower than their score from the previous period. Their net public trust was also higher in rural areas, where they scored 65–23 points higher than their urban areas. Incidents involving police misconduct, unwarranted use of force, and a lack of transparency have led to a prevailing atmosphere of distrust among civilians.

The police force, a public institution, highly depends on the nation's trust. For instance, the legitimacy of the police force is based on the public's perceptions. The people are most expected to submit and cooperate with the police force when their trust in the authorities is being kept high. Without the trust of the public, the police force may have difficulties in imposing its functions in society. The PNP, a public office, must establish a public trust to maximize its effectiveness for the nation (Pelayo *et al.*, 2019).

The relationship of public trust in the police force is a global concern. A study conducted in South Korea indicated factors affecting public trust in their police force. The first influencing factor is the interaction between the legal authorities and the public, crucial in shaping the public's perception of the police. The study also mentioned that social cohesion was an influential factor. The relationships between the community and its members have proven to be a significant aspect in shaping

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the public trust in the police force. The study also stated that police effectiveness is a significant factor in how the public perceives the police force (Lim & Kwak, 2022). A study based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, determined that public trust and cooperation are moving factors for the effectiveness of the police. Thus, the relationship between the two variables should be mutually beneficial, as the police also need cooperation and respect from the public and vice versa (Melkamu & Teshome, 2023). It also has been found that empathy among the public and law enforcement is an essential factor in establishing trust (Rosenbaum *et al.*, 2017).

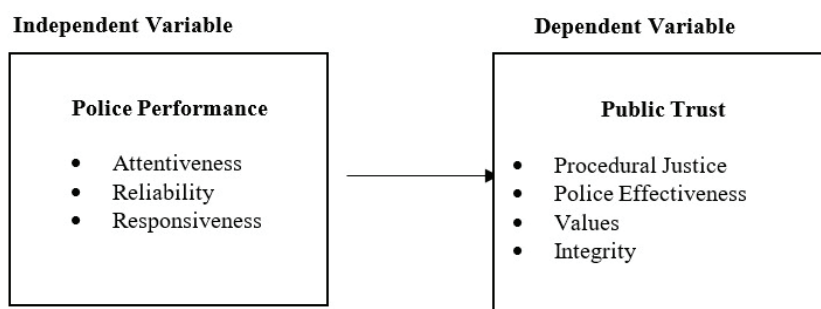
Richard L. Oliver (1980) proposed a so-called Expectancy-disconfirmation theory and is also related to our study; the model is proposed as the primary method for elucidating citizen satisfaction with public services. According to this model, individuals assess the performance of a service by comparing it to their preexisting expectations of that service (Zhang, Petrovsky, and Walker, 2021). Suppose law enforcement consistently needs to catch up in crime prevention, community safety, and treating people respectfully. In that case, it can result in reduced trust since these unmet expectations lead to a decline in people's confidence (Chakravarty, 2018). This theory is relevant to the study because students, as citizens, will have certain expectations of how police should perform their duties effectively and lawfully. Their level of trust in the police may be influenced by whether police actions align with or contradict their expectations. If police exceed expectations, it leads to positive disconfirmation and higher trust, whereas failing expectations result in negative disconfirmation and lower trust.

Another theory, the Procedural justice theory proposed by Tom R. Tyler, pertains to the concept of impartial procedures and how the quality of their experiences heavily shapes individuals' perception of equity

(Longley, 2022). It suggests that when people perceive a lack of fairness, transparency, and accountability in law enforcement procedures, trust can be eroded. If incidents are not handled impartially or if wrongdoing goes unchecked within the police force, it can decrease the public's confidence in the integrity of their actions and decisions (TJC, n.d.). This theory links well to the study aims because fair, transparent, and participatory police procedures when interacting with the public are essential determinants of trust in the eyes of community members. Students may have views on whether police procedures demonstrate impartiality and ethical treatment and give a voice to citizens.

Lastly, the Legitimacy theory proposed by Deegan and Rankin in 1996 emphasizes the importance of perceived legitimacy in institutions and authorities. It argues that individuals are more likely to trust and cooperate with institutions they perceive as legitimate (Dewiyanti, 2021). In the context of law enforcement, the theory suggests that public trust is influenced by perceptions of the legitimacy of police actions, adherence to legal norms, and the overall fairness of the justice system.

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework that emphasizes the relationship between police performance, the independent variable, and public trust, the dependent variable. The independent variable of police performance included three key dimensions: attentiveness, reliability, and responsiveness Abril *et al.* (2022). Attentiveness refers to the ability of the police to be observant and alert to their surroundings and the community's needs (Kochel, 2012). Reliability pertains to the consistent and dependable delivery of police services, ensuring they fulfill their obligations and commitments (Haberman, 2017). Responsiveness encompassed the timely and appropriate police actions to address community concerns and needs (Ord, 2020).



**Figure 1:** The conceptual framework of the study

On the other hand, the dependent variable of public trust was measured through four indicators by Pelayo *et al.* (2019): procedural justice, police effectiveness, values, and integrity. Procedural justice reflects fairness and transparency in police procedures and decision-making processes (Pickett and Ryon, 2017). Police effectiveness assessed the extent to which the police successfully maintained public safety and prevented crime (Telep & Weisburd, 2020). Values refer to aligning police actions with the values and

expectations of the community they serve (Jackson *et al.*, 2012). Lastly, integrity pertains to the ethical conduct and honesty exhibited by the Police (Pickett & Ryon, 2017). By highlighting these dimensions, the framework underscored the importance of a positive and mutually reinforcing relationship between police performance and public trust, where effective and trustworthy policing practices fostered public confidence and cooperation, ultimately leading to safer and more harmonious communities.

The primary objective of this study was to provide a quantitative analysis of how the performance of the police force influenced the level of trust that the public had. By conducting a quantitative analysis, the study sought to provide empirical evidence and numerical insights into the relationship between police performance and public trust. To achieve this, the researchers sought deeper through this study's specific objectives, which were as follows:

(1) To describe the level of police performance perceived among criminology students at the University of Mindanao in terms of attentiveness, reliability, and responsiveness was determined.

(2) To describe the level of public trust perceived by criminology students in police performance, including procedural justice, police effectiveness, values, and integrity, was identified.

(3) To determine the significant relationship between the levels of police performance and public trust perceived by criminology students at the University of Mindanao.

(4) To determine if level of police performance predicts the trust as perceived by criminology students at the University of Mindanao. It assessed whether better attentiveness, reliability, and responsiveness of the police could considerably raise the public's confidence in the police forces.

The significance of the study is as follows:

(1) It provides empirical evidence of the relationship between police performance and public trust. Armed with this evidence,

(2) the researchers and the University of Mindanao will be able to advocate for specific improvements within law enforcement practices. By presenting the data to relevant stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies, policymakers, and community leaders, the researcher can actively contribute to advocating for reforms that enhance attentiveness, reliability, and responsiveness by shedding light on the interplay between police performance and public trust.

(3) This study contributes to the broader goal of creating safer and more harmonious communities. Most importantly,

4) the study supports achieving U.N. Sustainable Development Goal 16 of promoting peaceful, just societies by examining factors influencing trust in law enforcement.

## METHODOLOGY

### Study Participant

The research respondents of this study were criminology students. The selection of respondents was carried out using simple random sampling. It is a sampling technique where subjects are selected completely by chance in a way that gives each member of the population an equal probability of inclusion in the sample (Thomas, 2023). Researchers chose criminology students as respondents since they are more likely to have a strong interest in the

topic being studied because it aligns with their chosen course of study; this can lead to greater engagement and motivation among the respondents, resulting in more thoughtful and detailed responses. Moreover, as future professionals in the field of criminology, the insights and findings from the study can have direct implications for the student's future careers because by involving them as respondents, the research outcomes can contribute to their professional development, inform their future decision-making, and potentially benefit the field of criminology.

A total sample size of three hundred (300) selected criminology students served as respondents for this study. The researchers balanced the sample size and the allotted time for conducting the study, and the number of respondents in this study was decided by practical concerns such as available resources (time, budget, and personnel) and the feasibility of collecting data within a particular timeframe. This research aimed to generalize findings to a larger population. In doing so, researchers strove to ensure that the selected sample was representative of the population from which to draw inferences.

### Materials and Instrument

The researchers in this study utilized an adapted questionnaire from the study of Abril *et al.* (2022) on Measuring public trust in the police. The questionnaire used in this study aimed to measure public trust in the police and explore its possible determinants. Based on a conceptual framework, the questionnaire consisted of multiple sections addressing different aspects related to trust in the police. The key pillars of trust examined were procedural justice, effectiveness, values between citizens and the idea of police forces, and the perception of integrity. The questionnaire included specific questions targeting these pillars, allowing respondents to provide their opinions and perceptions on each aspect (UCLA, n.d).

The questionnaire had undergone validation by the panel and pilot testing. Validation determines the dependability, validity, and effectiveness of a questionnaire or survey instrument. It entails ensuring that the questions and choices for responses are clear, relevant, and capable of measuring what they are intended to measure (Architha, 2020). Pilot testing aims to assess the instrument's feasibility, reliability, and efficacy and identify and address any potential flaws or areas for improvement (Shakespeare, 2023).

The results of the pilot testing showed acceptable internal consistency, indicating that the questionnaire items were measuring the intended constructs effectively ( $\alpha=0.84$ ). Furthermore, the pilot testing revealed a high correlation between the perception measures of the different pillars and the general trust question. This correlation indicated that the measures of procedural justice, effectiveness, values, and integrity were strongly associated with public trust in the police.

A questionnaire from the study Public Perception on Job Performance was utilized as a data collection instrument to examine the perception and attitude of the public towards the Police in Barangay Balibago, Angeles City, Philippines. It was designed to gather information regarding the public's opinions on various aspects of the police, including their trust in the police and their perception of the police's performance, specifically their attentiveness, reliability, and responsiveness. This questionnaire undergone pilot testing and validation by the panel of experts. Using Cronbach's alpha, the questionnaire obtained a very high internal consistency ( $\alpha=0.90$ ).

The independent and dependent variables, police performance and public trust, were measured using this survey questionnaire employing a five (5) -point Likert scale. The researchers communicated with the respondents to provide instructions regarding the date, method, and format for distributing and collecting the questionnaires. Initially, the respondents received guidance on adequately completing the questionnaire to ensure clarity. Subsequently, the collected questionnaires were gathered and organized, and the relevant data was compiled and recorded in an Excel file through a tallying process.

### Design and Procedure

A correlational research design was utilized in this quantitative study. Correlational research design is a scientific approach that investigates the association between two or more variables. Its primary objective was to assess the presence, intensity, and direction of the relationship between the variables under scrutiny (Mchomes, 2019). It helped the researchers establish baseline information about the current levels of police performance and public trust among criminology students at the University of Mindanao.

Furthermore, the study involved the use of a quantitative research approach. Quantitative methods prioritized using objective measurements and analyzed numerical data through statistical, mathematical, or computational techniques (Babbie, 2010). This type of research involved collecting data through polls, questionnaires, surveys, or analyzing existing statistical data (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014). Its primary objective was to gather numerical data and draw generalizations across different groups or explain specific phenomena (Babbie, 2010).

Before conducting the study, the researchers obtained title approval from the Dean's College of Criminal Justice Education, ensuring the necessary authorization to proceed. Subsequently, a comprehensive literature review was conducted to gain insights into previous related research and identify any existing gaps in the literature. This step provided a solid foundation for the study and facilitated the formulation of research questions. Additionally, a quantitative survey or questionnaire concerning perceptions of police performance and levels of public trust was developed.

During the data collection phase, the researchers recruited selected criminology students from the University of Mindanao to participate. This selection aimed to gather relevant perspectives and insights from individuals with a background in the field. All survey data were meticulously cleaned and prepared to ensure data accuracy and integrity. This involved organizing the data in an Excel sheet, enabling efficient data interpretation and subsequent statistical analysis.

The analysis of the gathered data involved using Descriptive Statistics (like Mean and Standard Deviation), Spearman's rho, and Multiple Regression Analysis. Spearman's rho was chosen because the data on police performance ( $KS=0.84$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.00$ ) and public trust ( $KS=0.748$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.000$ ) did not follow a normal distribution. This statistic was used to evaluate the monotonic relationship between police performance and public trust, which means that as one variable changes, the other variable consistently increases or decreases. Additionally, regression analysis, which predicts the relationship between one or more independent variables and a dependent variable, was applied to determine the strength of these relationships and forecast future interactions (Taylor, 2020). To ensure data distribution normality, a log transformation was conducted.

### Ethical Considerations

The researchers who conducted this study were committed to upholding ethical principles throughout the research process. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and there was no obligation for prospective participants to complete or respond to the research questionnaire. They had the freedom to choose not to participate or provide a response. Prior informed consent was obtained from all respondents, and the confidentiality of their personal information, including details such as names, ages, and academic programs, was strictly maintained. It is important to note that this study did not involve any high-risk factors that may have posed physical, psychological, or socioeconomic implications. Furthermore, it was an original study and had not been plagiarized or falsified.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Level of Police Performance as Perceived by the Criminology Students

Table 1 shows the level of police performance in terms of attentiveness, reliability, and responsiveness using mean and standard deviation. Responsiveness stands out as a crucial aspect of police performance, indicating their ability to address community needs and concerns promptly and effectively. The notably high average rating ( $\bar{x}=4.47$ ) for perceived police responsiveness among criminology students at the University of Mindanao suggests a general perception that the local police force is attentive and proactive in addressing community issues. It underscores the significance of responsiveness in police performance, acknowledged and valued by these aspiring law enforcement professionals.

**Table 1:** Level of Police Performance as perceived by the criminology students

Police Performance	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Attentiveness	4.45	0.66	Very High
Reliability	4.41	0.72	Very High
Responsiveness	4.47	0.64	Very High
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.44</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>Very High</b>

A study by Peyton and Rand in 2019 showcased through a field experiment how police responsiveness and community engagement can enhance perceptions of police legitimacy and citizen cooperation. The findings of this study emphasize the significance of police responsiveness and community involvement in effective policing strategies. Prioritizing these aspects enables the police to bolster their legitimacy and forge stronger bonds with the communities they serve, thereby enhancing their overall performance and effectiveness (Peyton & Rand, 2019).

Reliability plays a vital role in police performance, showcasing their capacity to meet community expectations and obligations. The relatively lowest mean score ( $\bar{x}=4.41$ ) among the three dimensions of police performance. It suggests that these students perceive the local police force as not so consistent and only partially reliable in their service delivery. Thus, this result of the student's perception underscores the importance of reliability as a fundamental aspect of police performance, as it fosters public confidence, trust, and collaboration with law enforcement.

Griffiths & Winfree's book, published in 2016, titled *Theoretical Perspectives on Police Performance Measurement*, reliability emerges as a critical dimension of police performance, reflecting the consistency and trustworthiness of police services. Factors contributing to police reliability encompass response time, service provision, and the ability to fulfill commitments and responsibilities to the community. When the public can rely on the police to fulfill their promises and provide the expected level of service, it amplifies the police's capacity to address community concerns and uphold public safety. Otherwise, the public's trust towards the police decreases (Griffiths & Winfree, 2016).

In a study about victims' willingness to report crimes to the police, the surveys conducted revealed a noteworthy finding indicating that individuals' willingness to report incidents or issues to the police was significantly lower when they perceived law enforcement as unreliable in terms of following up on prior incidents or issues raised. Therefore, it negatively impacts their trust and confidence in the performance of the police, which in turn reduces

their willingness to report future incidents (Murphy & Barkworth, 2014).

Overall, criminology students have a very high perception of police performance ( $\bar{x}=4.44$ ). This suggests that the students generally perceive the police as fulfilling their duties effectively. The score of 4.44 implies that the students believe the police are meeting or surpassing expectations in areas such as attentiveness, reliability, and responsiveness to community needs. The notably high mean score indicates a positive evaluation of the police by this particular group of criminology students. This positive perception of police performance could be attributed to well-executed training programs, active community involvement, and a dedication to enforcing the law and ensuring public order (Lee & Vaughn, 2016).

**Level of Public Trust among Policemen in Davao City as Perceived by the Criminology Students**

Table 2 shows the level of public trust in procedural justice, police effectiveness, values, and integrity. The indicator values received the highest mean score of ( $\bar{x}=4.51$ ). In its 2017 publication, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development underscores the importance of values in establishing and preserving public trust. The policy brief highlights the crucial role of values, such as integrity and transparency, in maintaining trust in police forces. It emphasizes the significance of public service ethics in ensuring transparency, fairness, and responsiveness in garnering public trust (OECD, 2017).

The correlation between integrity and the extent of public trust is crucial for police performance. Integrity, which includes ethical behavior, transparency, and adherence to professional standards, is vital for maintaining public confidence in law enforcement. The relatively high score ( $\bar{x}=4.18$ ) among criminology students may indicate their perception of diminished integrity within the police force, possibly due to instances of misconduct, insufficient accountability, or a lack of organizational emphasis on ethical conduct. Research by Gau (2014) underscores that integrity is essential for public perception of the police. When the police are viewed as honest and fair, it enhances public trust and cooperation, which is vital for effective law enforcement and community safety.

**Table 2:** Level of Public Trust among Policemen in Davao City as perceived by the criminology students

Public Trust	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Procedural Justice	4.41	0.66	Very High
Police Effectiveness	4.41	0.64	Very High

Values	4.51	0.55	Very High
Integrity	4.18	0.85	High
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.38</b>	<b>0.59</b>	<b>Very High</b>

Further supporting this, Wolfe *et al.* (2011) found a strong link between police misconduct and a decline in public trust. Scandals and lack of integrity significantly undermine citizens' confidence in the police's ability to uphold communal values. Conversely, data from a survey at the University of Mindanao indicated a relatively positive perception of public trust in the police ( $\bar{x}=4.38$ ), suggesting that students view the police as demonstrating fairness, efficiency, and ethical standards. This aligns with Bennett *et al.* (2013), who found that honesty, shared ideals, procedural legality, and effectiveness are critical for influencing public perception of the police. When the police embody these qualities, public trust and willingness to cooperate with law enforcement increase, enhancing overall community safety.

**Test of Significant Relationship Between Police Performance and Public Trust**

Table 3 tests the significant relationship between police performance and public trust. Before analyzing the data, the researchers conducted an assumption check to ensure the reliability of the results. The police performance is assumed to be independent observation. The normality test results using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test show that the data is not normally distributed ( $p < 0.05$  for both variables) thus the researchers used the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient which is a statistical measure that quantifies the strength and direction of the monotonic relationship between two variables (Ayalew *et al.*, 2018).

**Table 3:** Test of Significant Relationship Between Police Performance and Public Trust

Police Performance	Public Trust				
	Procedural Justice	Police Effectiveness	Values	Integrity	Overall
Attentiveness	.728**	.703**	.521**	.708**	.776**
Reliability	.739**	.728**	.591**	.710**	.803**
Responsiveness	.664**	.715**	.572**	.622**	.742**
<b>Overall</b>	<b>.798**</b>	<b>.803**</b>	<b>.631**</b>	<b>.765**</b>	<b>.869**</b>

\*Significant @p-value <0.05, \*\*Significant @p-value <0.01

The study findings highlight a strong positive relationship between attentiveness and procedural justice, with a correlation coefficient of 0.728. Criminology students perceive that when police officers engage actively with the community, listen to their concerns, and make fair decisions, they are more likely to uphold procedural justice principles. This attentiveness fosters an environment of trust, respect, and confidence among students. Bradford's (2014) research supports this by showing that police attentiveness positively impacts how individuals perceive the fairness of their interactions with law enforcement, leading to a sense of procedural justice and legitimacy. Furthermore, the study found a significant relationship between attentiveness and police effectiveness, indicated by a Spearman's rho coefficient of 0.703. This suggests that criminology students view attentive police officers as more effective in their duties. Pryce, Johnson, and Maguire (2017) found similar results, showing that police engagement through attentive and respectful encounters with immigrant communities leads to greater cooperation and improved police effectiveness. Additionally, a moderate positive relationship ( $r_s = 0.521$ ) was found between attentiveness and values, indicating that the more attentive police officers are to community needs, the more their actions align with the values of criminology students (Mazerolle, 2013). The study also revealed a strong positive relationship

between police reliability and procedural justice ( $r_s = 0.739$ ). This means that as police reliability increases, so does the perception of procedural justice among criminology students. Mazerolle's (2013) findings support this by demonstrating that when police act fairly and respectfully, it enhances perceptions of their dependability and increases public trust. The significant relationship between reliability and effectiveness ( $r_s = 0.728$ ) suggests that consistent and reliable police actions positively impact students' evaluations of police performance. Additionally, a positive correlation between reliability and values (coefficient of 0.591) reflects that consistent police services align with community values, reinforcing trust (Gau, 2014). Lastly, the study found a significant positive relationship between responsiveness and procedural justice ( $r_s = 0.664$ ), indicating that police responsiveness enhances perceptions of fairness and transparency in their procedures (Mazerolle, 2013).

**Empirical Analysis of the Public Trust as Predicted by Police Performance**

The regression analysis revealed that the influence between police performance and the public was statistically significant ( $\beta = 0.325, 0.318, 0.204, p < 0.05$ ). It indicates an increase in attentiveness will result in (a 0.325) increase in public trust, an increase in reliability will result in (a 0.318) increase in public trust. Lastly,

an increase in responsiveness will result in (0.204) increase in public trust, indicating a strong positive correlation between the two variables. These coefficients demonstrate that improvements in attentiveness, reliability, and responsiveness are positively related with higher levels of public trust. The overall model fit was strong, explaining 75.9% of the variance of public trust

towards the Police ( $r^2 = 0.759$ ). Based on these findings, the researchers confidently conclude that an increase in police performance significantly predicts public trust. It implies that enhancing attentiveness, reliability, and responsiveness among law enforcement personnel will likely result in higher levels of trust from the public they serve.

**Table 4:** Empirical Analysis of the Public Trust as Predicted by Police Performance

Police Performance	B	S.E.	B	p-value
(Constant)	0.621	0.128		0.00
Attentiveness	0.325	0.037	0.365	0.00
Reliability	0.318	0.038	0.389	0.00
Responsiveness	0.204	0.04	0.221	0.00

$r^2 = 0.759$ ,  $F - value = 311.172$ ,  $p - value = 0.00$

The result of our data gathered was supported by a study conducted in Australia called Understanding Cooperation with Police in a diverse society. It provides strong evidence that an increase in police performance through improved response, follow-through, and outreach can positively impact subjective evaluations of police, increasing the public's feelings of trust. When the public observes police performing duties more effectively, through timely assistance and addressing local priorities, it enhances confidence and positive regard for law enforcement in fulfilling their protective responsibilities (Murphy & Cherney, 2011).

### CONCLUSION

Based on the study's findings, several key conclusions can be drawn regarding the impact of police performance indicators on public trust among criminology students at the University of Mindanao. There were high level of police performance and public trust as perceived by the criminology students. The strong positive relationships between attentiveness, procedural justice, and police effectiveness underscore the importance of police officers actively engaging with the community. This engagement, characterized by listening attentively and making fair decisions, significantly enhances perceptions of fairness and effectiveness among students. These findings align with Bradford's (2014) and Pryce, Johnson, and Maguire's (2017) studies, which also highlight the crucial role of police attentiveness in fostering procedural justice and effectiveness. The significant positive correlations between police reliability and various public trust indicators, such as procedural justice, values, and integrity, emphasize the critical role of consistent and dependable police actions in building trust. The study shows that when police officers reliably fulfill their duties and adhere to ethical standards, they positively influence students' perceptions of procedural justice and align with the community's values. Mazerolle's (2013) and Gau's (2014) research further supports these findings by demonstrating that reliable and fair police behavior increases public trust and confidence. The significant relationship between

police responsiveness and public trust indicators, including procedural justice and effectiveness, highlights the importance of police responsiveness in enhancing perceptions of fairness, transparency, and effectiveness. The study indicates that when police officers promptly address community concerns and needs, it leads to a higher sense of procedural justice and effectiveness among students. These conclusions reinforce the critical need for police to be attentive, reliable, and responsive to foster strong public trust and cooperation, ultimately contributing to more effective law enforcement and safer communities.

Furthermore, the regression analysis revealed that the influence of police performance on public trust was statistically significant ( $\beta = 0.325, 0.318, 0.204, p < 0.05$ ). Specifically, an increase in attentiveness resulted in a 0.325 increase in public trust, an increase in reliability led to a 0.318 increase in public trust, and an increase in responsiveness resulted in a 0.204 increase in public trust, indicating strong positive correlations between these variables. The overall model fit was robust, explaining 75.9% of the variance in public trust towards the police ( $r^2 = 0.759$ ). These coefficients demonstrate that improvements in attentiveness, reliability, and responsiveness are positively related to higher levels of public trust. Consequently, enhancing these aspects among law enforcement personnel will likely result in higher levels of trust from the public they serve.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study's findings, several recommendations are proposed to enhance police performance and build public trust. The government must develop and implement comprehensive training programs for police officers that focus on community policing, conflict resolution, effective communication, human rights, bias awareness, and de-escalation techniques. These programs should be mandatory and regularly updated to ensure officers remain informed of the latest practices and technologies in law enforcement. Additionally, establishing strict internal systems for monitoring and supervision,

alongside adopting a zero-tolerance approach towards misconduct, is essential. A robust system for evaluating police performance, including regular assessments, feedback mechanisms, and performance metrics, should be implemented to hold officers accountable and ensure that any misconduct is promptly addressed through disciplinary procedures.

For law enforcement agencies, enhancing community engagement is vital. Agencies should actively engage with community members through community policing programs and regular dialogue to build trust and understanding. Accessible and confidential reporting mechanisms for community members to report concerns or complaints about police conduct should be ensured. Promoting values alignment by ensuring police actions align with community values and expectations is also crucial. This can be achieved through ongoing ethical behavior training and involving community members in decision-making processes. Improving responsiveness to community needs and concerns should be prioritized through training programs focusing on effective communication and problem-solving skills, addressing perceived inconsistencies in police service delivery. Additionally, implementing policies and procedures to protect whistleblowers within the police force who report unethical or illegal behavior is necessary. Establishing a safe and confidential reporting mechanism that encourages officers to come forward without fear of retaliation is also essential.

For police officers, a commitment to procedural justice is important. Officers should emphasize procedural justice by ensuring fair and transparent practices and promoting positive interactions with community members through regular training and community engagement. Improving police effectiveness in addressing community concerns and promoting public safety can be achieved by actively engaging with the community through regular meetings and collaborations. Encouraging officers to engage with their local community through voluntary programs can foster mutual understanding and strengthen relationships between police and community members.

For the community, active collaboration with the police force is vital. Communities should foster open dialogue and collaboration to build trust and understanding, consistently involving community members in community policing programs to address local crime issues. Encouraging the use of accessible and confidential reporting mechanisms for community members to report concerns or complaints about police conduct is also necessary.

Lastly, for future researchers, utilizing a mixed-methods approach is recommended to further improve the study. Incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods can provide statistical data and meaningful information through interviews or focus groups, offering richer insights into the perceptions and experiences of criminology students toward police performance. These recommendations align with the study's findings, emphasizing the importance of attentiveness, reliability,

and responsiveness in building public trust in the police. Implementing these measures can lead to significant improvements in police-community relations and enhance the overall effectiveness of law enforcement.

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