

# Capabilities of Anti-Illegal Drug Enforcement Operatives in Cavite, Philippines

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**Abstract** – *The study generally aimed to enhance the anti-illegal drug operations in Cavite. More specifically, the study sought to: describe the profile of the respondents; determine the operational capabilities of Anti-Drug Operative of Cavite PNP with regards to surveillance, apprehension and prosecution; identify the problems encountered in the operation of drug operatives; test the difference in the capabilities and problems encountered when respondents were grouped according to profile variables; and propose a plan of action to enhance the operational capabilities of the anti-Illegal drug Operatives in Cavite.*

*Findings revealed that majority of the respondents are male, single, belonging to the 26-30 years old bracket, college graduate and have an experience of one month to 5 years in drug operation. The Anti-Illegal Drug enforcement operative of Cavite Police Provincial Office is capable with regards to surveillance, apprehension and prosecution. Anti-Illegal Drug enforcement operatives agree that problems are encountered in anti-drug operations in the province of Cavite. Highly Significant difference exist in the capabilities and problems encountered when respondents were grouped according to area of assignment. A plan of action is proposed to enhance the capabilities of anti-illegal drug operatives in Cavite.*

**Keywords:** *anti-illegal drug, enforcement operatives*

## INTRODUCTION

Dangerous Drugs is a social ill. It is a crime that corrupts humanity as the use thereof results in various nefarious crimes. Victims are from different walks of life and it affects the Filipinos core values, way of life, welfare and well-being. For over two decades law enforcement has been on the front line in the “war against drugs”. The government spends billions of pesos each year on drug enforcement efforts, and state and local police agencies spend a significant percentage of their total budgets on drug enforcement

activities [1]. Cacdac [2] clarified that the drug problem in the Philippines is worse than that of China, because out of 98 million Filipinos, 1.7 million are drug users, compared to China, which has 650,000 drug users against a population of 1 billion.

The Philippines faces challenges in the areas of drug use and production, law enforcement, corruption, and drug trafficking [3]. The drug problem in the Philippines remains significant, despite the continued efforts of the Philippine law enforcement authorities to disrupt major drug trafficking organizations and dismantle clandestine drug laboratories and warehouses.

According to Pollard [4], the illegal drug trade is a global black market and its consumption is widespread globally. He further claimed that it was necessary to understand the breath of its influence and its ability to destabilize countries. Helfrich [5] further disclosed that in many countries, drug smuggling carries severe penalties which include lengthy period of incarceration, flogging and even death penalty (In Singapore, Malaysia, China, etc.). Kimery [6] stated that the efforts to combat drug abuse and its consequences also represent a considerable financial investment. Santos [7] stated that drug trafficking industry is a lucrative business and it is considered a tax free and seldom subject to bankruptcy. Santos [7] further viewed that the great success and income generating capacity of trafficking has caught attention of high-profile smugglers who have the capacity for organizing and financing distribution networks and this subsequently resulted in rapid spread of resources and consequently with all such other factors as family problem, peer groups and others.

The Philippines' poorest regions, such as Mindanao, have the highest percentage of methamphetamine abusers. Crystal methamphetamine, locally known as “shabu”, continues to be the drug of choice in the Philippines and is consumed by all demographics. Information from the 2008 United Nations (UN) World drug report indicates that the Philippines has the world's highest estimated annual

methamphetamine prevalence rate (6%). The Philippines also produces, consumes and exports marijuana and it is currently the second most used drug in the country. Much of the cultivation is in mountainous regions, often in government-owned areas inaccessible to vehicles. Methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA or ecstasy) is commonly used in Metro Manila night clubs and bars by young and affluent members of society. A recent survey by the Philippine National Police (PNP) shows illegal drug usage as the fourth most pressing law enforcement problem in the Philippines [8].

The danger caused by drug has grown to alarming proportion in spite of prevention and suppression efforts by the PNP and other tasked government agencies to combat it. Day by day crimes committed by those high on illegal drugs continue to increase. Narcotics make possible the worst and most heinous crimes in society. It distorts reason, wreck values, and make monster of men. The number one drug choice in the country is Methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu, followed closely by Marijuana due to its relatively low price and availability. "ECSTACY" or MDMA is now being introduced in the market particularly in nightclubs and discos.

The motive of the drug lords, traffickers, pushers and their cohorts in the illegal trade is profit. Today, even a simple and ordinary person has entered into the drug trade simply because of its extensive return. The present economic crises forced street level pushers to the retailing of prohibited drugs as a means/source of livelihood. While on the other hand, many abusers use dangerous drugs as a vehicle to escape the realities/vagaries of poverty and its concomitant problems. Relatedly, lack of knowledge/information, loss of family values and other aspects of prohibited drugs caused many others to fall into the trap [9].

The PNP conducts an all-out and sustained anti-narcotics campaign to neutralize drug personalities from street-level pushers to big time drug lords, smugglers and syndicates; investigate and prosecute drug offenders; provide for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug dependents; and empower the barangay as self-policing entities against the drug menace.

According to the statistics [10], there are total of 3,266 cases of drug abuse in the Philippines. Ninety-three percent of it is male and seven percent is female. Cavite Police Provincial Office (CPPO) has intensified its campaign against illegal drugs. As a result, CPPO has topped four other provincial

headquarters in Region in terms of its operations against illegal drugs, loose firearms and criminals in the first five months of 2015 (Geron, 2015). Data show that from January to June 2015, a total of 1,055 persons were arrested, 2,802.4 grams of shabu and 17,566.55 grams of marijuana were confiscated with a worth value of Php 34,034,751.65 [11].

The intensified anti-illegal drugs campaign of Cavite PNP resulted in the arrest of drug personalities [12]. Likewise, four police officers were arrested in an anti-illegal drugs operation in January in Bacoor, Cavite [13]. Records likewise indicate that there is an increasing number of people arrested due to drugs with the month of June having the highest number of 236 individuals ([www.cavite.gov.ph](http://www.cavite.gov.ph)). This is in line with the on-going effort to eradicate all forms of criminalities particularly on illegal drugs over the province and send them behind bars as part of the OPLAN LAMBAT SIBAT of Cavite Police Provincial Office.

The study conducted by Manzano [14] concluded that the PNP in San Gabriel, La Union are highly educated, lower rank officers, relatively young in service and less trained in drug prevention program and the level of implementation of the anti-illegal Drugs Prevention Program on information and education is least implemented while partnership with the Local Government Units on policy formulation on a drug free community is moderately implemented. Baes [15] concluded that the citizens of Las Piñas, Philippines have a positive perception towards the drug prevention campaign of their local government who believed that their local government is doing its task of protecting its community from the hazards of illegal drugs.

The study deals with the operational capabilities of anti-illegal drug Operatives in Cavite Police. Knowing the capabilities and problems encountered by the anti-illegal drug operatives, can enhance the operation against illegal drugs. Hence, it is imperative to conduct a study on the operational capabilities of the anti-illegal drug operatives in Cavite as well as the identification of the problems encountered and its subsequent formulation of appropriate measures to enhance their performance as regards to drug assistance and security in maintaining the peace, order and security.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The paper generally aimed to enhance the anti-illegal drug operations in Cavite.

More specifically, the study sought to: describe the profile of the respondents; determine the operational capabilities of Anti-Drug Operative of Cavite PNP with regards to surveillance, apprehension and prosecution; identify the problems encountered in the operation of drug operatives; and test the difference in the capabilities and problems encountered when respondents were grouped according to profile variables.

## METHODS

### Research Design

This research utilized the descriptive method. The descriptive design is appropriate to this study since it is focused on the analysis of a given situation, particularly in the operational capability of Anti Drug Operatives of Cavite Police Provincial Office by utilizing questionnaire in order to answer the questions regarding the operational capability of the Anti-illegal Drug Operatives of Cavite PPO as regards to personnel operational capability and community's involvement and its implication to the community and maintenance of peace and order and security for safety of the community.

Descriptive research is used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena to describe "what exists" with respect to variables or conditions in a situation. The methods involved range from the survey which describes the status quo, the correlation study which investigates the relationship between variables, to developmental studies which seek to determine changes over time [16].

### Participants

Participants of the study were fifty drug operatives (100%) assigned in the different area of study. Ten (10) from Provincial Anti-Illegal Drug Special Operation Task Group; forty (40) from City Anti Illegal Drug Special Operation Task Group of Bacoor City, Imus City, Dasmaringas City and Cavite City, Philippines.

### Instrument

The study utilized a researcher-made questionnaire taken from the data at the Cavite Police Provincial Office. The questions were based on the operational capabilities and problems encountered based on variables identified by the researcher such as the surveillance, apprehension and prosecution. It was presented to the adviser for approval and was validated by the two (2) former Chiefs of Provincial Police Anti-Illegal Drug Special Operations Task Group (PAIDSOTG) who had the knowledge and

experience in drug operations, the Chief of Provincial Intelligence Branch (S2), the Chief of Provincial Operations Branch (S3) and also the Deputy Provincial Director for Operations (DPDO) who is the over-all supervisor in the operational matters in Cavite Police Provincial Office (Cavite PPO). A pre-testing of the survey questionnaire was conducted to similar groups of respondents in Bacoor City, Imus City, Dasmaringas City and Cavite City.

### Data Analysis

To analyze the data, the following statistical tools were utilized: percentage was utilized to provide meaningful description of profiles and attributes of the respondents, and to aid comprehension of the data; weighted mean (WM) was used to measure the central tendency, it was computed to determine the average response of the respondents on the variable under the study; and One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the significance of the difference among the groups of respondents.

The given scale was used to interpret the result of the data gathered: 3.50 - 4.00 = Highly Capable; 2.50 - 3.49 = Capable; 1.50 - 2.49 = Less Capable; 1.00 - 1.49 = Not Capable. To interpret the result of the data gathered in terms of the problems encountered, the given scale was used: 3.50 - 4.00 = Strongly Agree (SA); 2.50 - 3.49 = Agree (A); 1.50 - 2.49 = Disagree (D); 1.00 - 1.49 = Strongly Disagree (SD).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1. Percentage Distribution of the Respondents' Profile**

	Profile Variables	f	%
Age	20 – 25 years old	5	10.00
	26 – 30 years old	16	32.00
	31 – 35 years old	13	26.00
	36 – 40 years old	7	14.00
	41 – 45 years old	7	14.00
	46 – 50 years old	1	2.00
	51 – 55 years old	1	2.00
Sex	Male	47	94.00
	Female	3	6.00
Civil Status	Single	30	60.00
	Married	20	40.00
Educational Attainment	College Degree	45	90.00
	MA Units	4	8.00
	MA Degree	1	2.00
Area	Dasmaringas PNP	10	20.00
	Bacoor PNP	10	20.00
	Cavite City PNP	10	20.00
	Imus PNP	10	20.00
	Cavite Prov. PNP	10	20.00

**Table 1 (cont). Percentage Distribution of the Respondents' Profile**

Profile Variables	f	%
Years of 1 mo – 5 yrs	41	82.00
experience 6 – 10 yrs	3	6.00
as Drug op 11 – 15 yrs	4	8.00
16 – 20 yrs	2	4.00

Table 1 shows that majority of the respondents are male (94%), belonging to the 26-30 years old bracket, followed by 31-35 years old, single, and college graduate (90%). Majority of the respondents has been in drug operation task force from one (1) month to five (5) years. Data indicates that most drug operatives are young and has relatively few years of experience in drug operation.

Being a drug operation task force member could be dangerous and requires long period of surveillance. Being mostly male and single allows them to concentrate and focus in their duties.

**Table 2. Capabilities of Anti-drugs Operatives with Regards to Surveillance**

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. Specialized training	2.58	Capable	3
2. Spy Camera	2.04	Less Capable	7
3. Monitoring gadget	2.14	Less Capable	6
4. Experience in drug surveillance	3.00	Capable	1
5. Vehicle for drug surveillance	2.52	Capable	4
6. Budget for drug operation	2.42	Less Capable	5
7. Emotional and psychological preparation for drug surveillance	2.96	Capable	2
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.52</b>	<b>Capable</b>	

Data on table 2 reveal that respondents agree that drug operatives are capable with regards to surveillance. Obtaining the highest weighted mean score is Experience in drug surveillance (3.00), followed by Emotional and psychological preparation for drug surveillance (2.96) and Specialized training (2.58).

On the other hand, respondents agree that they are less capable in terms of equipment's needed for drug surveillance. Getting the lowest mean is spy camera (2.04), monitoring gadget (2.14), and budget for drug operation (2.42). This indicates that while respondents agree that drug operatives are capable with regards to surveillance in terms of personnel's preparation, they

are less capable in terms of equipments needed to perform their job better. Based from the interview conducted among the respondents during the survey, lack of equipment is one problem in their drug operation.

Result is similar to the study conducted by Baes [15] where he concluded that the local government of Las Piñas City does not allocate a substantial portion of their budget for funding the creation and implementation of programs related to drug prevention campaign. Allocating funds for vehicles, equipments and gadgets and budget for drug operations is very important for the anti-illegal drugs campaign to be successful.

**Table 3. Capabilities of Anti-drugs Operatives with Regards to Apprehension**

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. Knowledge of arrest techniques	3.30	Capable	3
2. Knowledge of PNP operational procedures	3.26	Capable	4
3. Equipment like:			
3.1 Handcuffs	3.38	Capable	2
3.2 Vehicle	2.76	Capable	6
3.3 Firearms	2.94	Capable	5
4. Knowledge and respect of Human rights	3.42	Capable	1
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.18</b>	<b>Capable</b>	

Table 3 reveals that Anti-drug operatives are capable with regards to apprehension. It obtained a composite mean of 3.18. Getting the highest mean score of 3.42 is item on knowledge and respect of human rights. It was followed by handcuffs (3.38) and knowledge of arrest techniques. On the other hand, obtaining the lowest mean score is Vehicle (2.76), followed by firearms (2.94).

Knowledge and respect for human rights is parts of the basic trainings provided for PNP personnel the reason why it obtained the highest score with regards to capabilities in terms of apprehension. Handcuffs is likewise the basic equipment needed for apprehending criminal offenders and is affordable. These two items got the highest score, respectively.

Vehicles and firearms are badly needed in drug operations. In fact, these are necessities. Without these, anti-drug operatives will really have difficulties in surveillance, apprehending and arresting individuals suspected to be drug users, pushers, traffickers and drug lords. Manzano [14] in his study, recommended that the Local Government Unit should

be tapped to allocate funds for the maintenance and other operating expenses of the Anti-Illegal Drugs Operation to support and not to disrupt the said program.

**Table 4. Capabilities of Anti-drugs Operatives with Regards to Prosecution**

	WM	VI	Rank
Proper training in documents preparation			
1. affidavit of arrests	3.32	Capable	4
2. information for filing of appropriate charges in the prosecutor's office	3.32	Capable	4
3. other components of PNP operatives	3.32	Capable	4
4. dedication to duty	3.38	Capable	1
5. Moral integrity	3.36	Capable	2
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.34</b>	<b>Capable</b>	

Table 4 shows that respondents agree that Anti-drugs Operatives are capable with regards to prosecution. It obtained a composite mean of 3.34. Obtaining the highest mean score is dedication to duty (3.38), followed by moral integrity. Meanwhile, items on proper training in documents preparation with regards to affidavit of arrest, information of filing of appropriate charges in the prosecutor's office and other components of PNP operatives obtain a weighted mean score of 3.32.

Basic requirements for drug operatives are their dedication to duty and moral integrity. Without these values, they can easily be tempted to accept bribes and may become protectors of drug pushers, or drug pushers themselves.

As drug problem in the Philippines remains significant [3] trainings to enhance the capabilities of anti-drug enforcement operatives with regards to their operation are being done periodically to help them in the performance of their duties.

Table 5 shows that majority of the respondents agree there are problems encountered in the Anti-drug operation in Cavite. Obtaining the highest weighted mean score is lack of vehicle for drug operation (3.26), followed by Not enough budget and lack of equipment needed, both getting weighted mean score of 3.22. Next is lack of support from the community (3.18). These identified problems are due to lack of budget allotted for drug operations by the Philippine National Police. Without vehicles and other needed equipment, anti-drugs operations will be paralyzed.

On the other hand, items on lack of knowledge on other components of PNP operatives, lack of knowledge on PNP operational procedures and

information of filing appropriate charges in the prosecutor's office obtained the lowest mean score with 1.94, 2.06 and 2.10, respectively.

**Table 5. Problems Encountered by Police Respondent in its Anti-Drug Operation**

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. Lack of support from the community	3.18	Agree	4
2. Not enough budget	3.22	Agree	2.5
3. Lack of training in drug operation	3.00	Agree	5
4. Lack of needed vehicles for drug operation	3.26	Agree	1
5. Lack of equipment needed	3.22	Agree	2.5
6. Lack of experience in drug surveillance	2.48	Disagree	6
7. Lack of emotional and psychological training of drug operatives	2.34	Disagree	7
8. Lack of Knowledge of arrest techniques	2.12	Disagree	9
9. Lack of knowledge on PNP operational procedures	2.06	Disagree	11
10. Lack Proper training in documents preparation like affidavit of arrest, etc	2.28	Disagree	8
11. Information for filing of appropriate charges in the prosecutor's office	2.10	Disagree	10
12. Lack of knowledge on other components of PNP operatives	1.94	Disagree	12
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.60</b>	<b>Agree</b>	

According to Section 51, Article 7 of Republic Act 9165, Local Government Units Assistance, local government units shall appropriate a substantial portion of their respective annual budgets to assist in or enhance the enforcement of this Act, giving priority to preventive or educational programs and rehabilitation or treatment of drug dependents.

Manzano [14] in his research entitled "Performance of the Philippine National Police in the Implementation of Anti-Illegal Drug Program in the Municipality of San Gabriel, La Union recommended that the local government Unit of San Gabriel should be tapped to allocate funds for the maintenance and other operating expenses of the Anti-Illegal Drug Prevention Program of the municipality so as not to disrupt the said program.

Table 6 reveals that there is a significant difference on the capabilities of anti-drug operatives when grouped according to area of assignment, thus the null hypothesis is rejected on the above mentioned variables.

**Table 6. Difference of Responses on Capabilities of Anti-drugs Operatives When Grouped According to Profile Variables**

	Profile Variables	F-value	p-value
Surveillance	Sex	0.290	0.773
	Civil Status	0.699	0.488
	Educational Attainment	1.337	0.273
	Age	0.829	0.554
	Years	2.047	0.120
	Area of Assignment	18.917**	0.000
Apprehension	Sex	0.051	0.960
	Civil Status	0.300	0.765
	Educational Attainment	0.140	0.870
	Age	1.446	0.220
	Years	1.364	0.266
	Area of Assignment	7.781**	0.000
Prosecution	Sex	0.019	0.985
	Civil Status	0.755	0.454
	Educational Attainment	0.624	0.540
	Age	1.552	0.185
	Years	0.683	0.567
	Area of Assignment	10.560**	0.000

\*\*Significant at  $p$ -value  $< 0.01$

This only means that the capability of the anti-drug operatives with regards to surveillance, apprehension and prosecution varies as to the area of assignment of the person concerned.

The support of the local government executive or the local government unit is paramount in the success of the anti-illegal drug operations. The income of the local government and the priorities of the local chief executive would command the amount of support the anti-illegal drug operations will get. Constant coordination between the PNP and Local Chief Executive is necessary.

Capability of drug-operatives in anti-drug operations is largely dependent on the budget allocated for operation, vehicles, equipment and gadgets used by anti-illegal drug operatives. As seen in table 5, problems are on vehicles and other equipment needed for operation and the budget itself. Budget of Police Station comes from the PNP and the Local Government Unit concerned may allocate funds for Police operations.

Table 7 shows that there is a significant difference on the problems encountered on anti-drug operation when grouped according to area of assignment, thus the null hypothesis is rejected on the above mentioned variables. This indicates that the problems

encountered by the respondents' vary as to their area of assignment.

**Table 7. Difference of Responses on Problems Encountered by Police Respondent in its Anti-Drug Operation When Grouped According to Profile Variables**

Profile Variables	F-value	p-value
Sex	0.941	0.351
Civil Status	0.236	0.815
Educational Attainment	0.393	0.677
Age	0.872	0.523
Years	0.999	0.402
Area of Assignment	8.007**	0.000

\*\*Significant at  $p$ -value  $< 0.01$

Aside from the lack of vehicles, equipment, budget for anti-illegal drug operations, problems of anti-illegal drug comes from socio-demographic profile of the selected areas.

#### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Majority of the respondents are male, single, belonging to the 26-30 years old bracket, college graduate and have an experience of one month to 5 years in drug operation. The drug enforcement operatives of Cavite Police Provincial Office are capable with regards to surveillance, apprehension and prosecution. Drug enforcement operatives agree that problems are encountered in anti-drug operations in the province of Cavite. Highly Significant difference exists in the capabilities and problems encountered when respondents were grouped according to area of assignment. A plan of action is proposed to enhance the capabilities of anti-drug operatives in Cavite.

It is recommended that Cavite Police Provincial Office, through its Provincial director may request for additional funds needed for anti-drug operations, to purchase vehicles, and equipment and other gadgets necessary for the success of anti-illegal drug operations. The PNP leadership in Cavite may conduct Police Community Relations activities to encourage community members to participate in anti-drug related activities. The proposed plan of action to enhance the capabilities of anti-drug operatives may be implemented and evaluated. Similar researches may be conducted using different variables.

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