

Public Trust and Satisfaction on Policing in Kibungan, Benguet

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DOI: 10.29322/IJSRP.15.11.2025.p16733
<https://dx.doi.org/10.29322/IJSRP.15.11.2025.p16733>

Paper Received Date: 27th October 2025
Paper Acceptance Date: 24th November 2025
Paper Publication Date: 2nd December 2025

Abstract- Public trust is the citizen's belief that police officers have appropriate motives and are competent their duties as the public experts. Public satisfaction is the people's attitudes about how well the police perform their job. This study is conducted to know the level of public trust to the police and the level of public satisfaction to the police in the locality of Kibungan, Benguet. This study utilized Quantitative method research through questionnaire checklist type. Cluster sampling was utilized in determining the 247 respondents specifically from Barangay Madaymen and Poblacion. Weighted mean, ranking and frequency were employed to interpret the level of public trust and satisfaction. Based on the findings, the level of public trust with a weighted mean of 3.27, is described as a lot of trust while the level of public satisfaction as satisfied with a weighted mean of 3.25.

Index Terms- Public, Trust, Kibungan, Satisfaction, Policing

I. INTRODUCTION

Reliability and public satisfaction with law enforcement are prerequisites for a healthy society. Upholding justice, guaranteeing public safety, and preserving law and order all depend on policing. Communities are more secure and cooperative when the public believes that law enforcement authorities are doing a good job and they are satisfied with their performance. However, strained links between law enforcement and the communities they serve can result from a decline in satisfaction or faith in policing, which can impede attempts to prevent and resolve crimes. Concerns about police accountability, openness, and behavior have generated a lot of public discussion and scrutiny in recent years. Mistrust and discontent have been exacerbated by high-profile cases of racial profiling, police brutality, and structural inequities among different groups in society. The significance of tackling fundamental structural problems in law enforcement organizations and striving to restore public satisfaction and trust has been highlighted by these occurrences. It is then

necessary to analyse how the public view the police officers in their place.

The major objective of this study is to know the level of trust of the community to the Philippine National Police policing in keeping the community safe and secure from crime and the level of satisfaction of the respondents in terms of crime prevention and control, and maintenance of peace and order in the locality of Kibungan, Benguet.

The researcher used a quantitative research design in this study. Specifically, this study employed a descriptive method where quantitative data is collected and analyzed. This method heled the researcher to describe the public trust and satisfaction to the policing employed in Kibungan, Benguet (LibGuides: Qualitative Research: Mixed Methods Research, 2023).

The study will be conducted in the municipality of Kibungan, Benguet specifically to the central areas of Kibungan, where police officers are usually seen such as Poblacion, and Madaymen because the researcher wants to provide answers as to how the residents trust and are satisfied with the Philippine National Police (PNP) policing in Kibungan, Benguet. The researchers used cluster sampling which is a type of probability sampling whereas, the researchers randomly select a subset of participants from a population. The total number of population was 247.

II. RESEARCH ELABORATIONS

Police officers serve as the civil authority of the government, charged with maintaining public order and safety, enforcing laws, and preventing, detecting, and investigating crime. These duties are what define policing (Whetstone, 2023). Public trust in community policing is crucial for enhancing police effectiveness in maintaining peace, safety, and crime prevention. The public's confidence in police service hinges on how people in their community view police performance. People's perceptions of police actions and how those actions are experienced by the community are influential factors shaping trust and confidence in the police (Gyamfi, 2022).

Additionally, public trust is affected by how safe people feel, their prior interactions with law enforcement, and past experiences of unfair treatment. Trust in the police may decline

when police actions are publicly exposed or when victims have negative experiences. Conversely, the police can cultivate trust by treating community members and crime victims with fairness and respect (Ruddell & Trott, 2022). Moreover, public satisfaction with law enforcement is linked to higher levels of trust and willingness to cooperate, which in turn helps officers perform their duties. When the public is satisfied with the police, they view them as a necessary part of society.

In Canada, the police rely on ongoing public support and cooperation to carry out their duties effectively. Citizens' readiness to report crimes, assist with investigations, contact police for help, and follow laws and police directions shapes how they view the police. Thirty-nine to forty-nine percent of Canadians believed the police were performing well across key measures such as enforcing laws, responding to calls, being approachable and easy to talk to, ensuring public safety, and treating people fairly (Ibrahim, 2020).

In the United States, amid demonstrations against police brutality, public trust in the police fell to a record low. A Gallup survey in 2018 showed confidence in the police dropping to 48%, with a 37% gap between white and Black Americans in expressing confidence and satisfaction—56% of white Americans versus 19% of Black Americans (Ortiz, 2020). In Mexico, most people do not trust the criminal justice system. To rebuild trust, police must improve police–public relations and maintain neighborhood security, as police corruption undermines trust and satisfaction with police performance (Baek, 2021).

In Russia, public trust in regional police authorities declined from 58% in 2020 to 57% in 2021, with the highest level of trust observed in 2017 at 67% (Statista Research Department, 2022). In Asia, studies in South Korea indicate that police effectiveness, fair procedures, and social cohesion positively influence public trust, with police effectiveness being the strongest factor, followed by procedural justice and social cohesion (Lim & Kwak, 2022).

Conversely, the PAHAYAG 2023 Survey reported that the Philippine National Police (PNP) saw a notable drop in public regard in the second quarter of 2023, with approval falling from 54% to 49% and trust from 43% to 39% (Manila Standard, 2023). This decline highlights the urgency of a comprehensive evaluation of police performance in the country. A key measure of police performance is the public's perception of the police (Mazowita & Rotenberg, 2019).

In Cagayan De Oro, research by Cimine et al. (2022) found that all 12,740 respondents felt secure and at ease in their neighborhoods because the police were effectively performing their duties. Some informants did express concerns about hold-up incidents during the survey period, suggesting the PNP should continue improving operations to ensure safety. Despite these concerns, trust and respect scores improved significantly compared with the 2021 poll, indicating greater satisfaction with the PNP's engagement within a year. The study also suggests that peace and order are now under better control in the region with support from the community, local government units, and the PNP Region X.

However, distrustful citizens are less likely to report crimes, cooperate as witnesses, or provide information. People with low support for the police are more prone to commit offenses such as theft, speeding, driving under the influence, or

other violations. Similarly, individuals who view the criminal justice system as biased are more likely to see the law as abusive and therefore be less willing to obey it (Manwong, n.d.).

Also, the National Police Commission also stated that police personnel from the Cordillera Administrative Region were among the nation's best disciplined policemen (NAPOLCOM). Among the 6,224-strong regional police force in 2018, only 1.6 percent were charged with offenses ranging from minor to serious, representing one of the lowest charging rates among all 17 regional police offices. A recent Community Evaluation Survey study which found that police in the Cordillera obtained nearly perfect scores across all indices, including satisfaction, trust, respect and safety, reinforced this (Hent, 2019).

Eventually, in La Trinidad, Benguet, Mayor Romeo K. Salda said in 2020 that the significant achievement of La Trinidad Municipal Police Station (LTMPS) as the best municipal police station is a clear evidence that the law enforcers in the municipality adhere to the standard of trusted, dedicated, and responsible public servants. In relation, the residents of the 16 barangays in La Trinidad, Benguet have shown their trust and confidence in LTMPS in making Benguet's capital town a safe place to live and work and that the discipline of everyone greatly contributed to the reduced crime committed in the municipality. La Trinidad Municipal Police Station was able to get its first award

as Best Municipal Police Station in the country during the tour of duty of Superintendent Benson Macli-ing (Hent, 2020).

Understanding the public trust of the community of Kibungan toward the Philippine National Police (PNP) is crucial for assessing the effectiveness of police–community relations in the area. Public trust serves as a foundation for cooperation, accountability, and mutual respect between the police and the community they serve. When the community trusts the PNP, it fosters a safer environment through increased collaboration in crime prevention, reporting, and community engagement initiatives. Given that the PNP's mandate includes upholding integrity, accountability, and ethical standards, measuring public trust helps identify strengths and areas for improvement in police service delivery. With that, the researcher was motivated to conduct this study. The theories and concepts presented in this section serve as a guide, basis, support, and suggestion about the public perception about police in terms of public trust and satisfaction in the performance of their duties and responsibilities, police performance in terms of crime prevention and control, and how do the public participate in crime prevention and maintenance of peace and order in the community.

Home-Rule Theory. Home Rule Theory in police service implies that policemen are community servants who depend on the public's expressed needs for effective service. They are civil servants whose primary responsibility is to maintain public peace and security. (Lopez & Taynan Jr., 2021). In relation to the study, police officers provide a framework about the role of the policemen in the society, and it helps to ensure that they are accountable to the community and to the people they serve. In addition, Policemen are accountable to face any consequences that may arise while exercising their power, duties, and functions upon the expressed wishes of the

public for their legal responsibility. The public believes that trustworthy police officers truly care about the community.

Koper Curve Theory. The Koper Curve Theory of patrolling emanating from the Minneapolis Hot Spots Policing Experiment and tested in Sacramento Police Department study in California. The Koper Curve Theory states that crime is less likely to occur in small area that contain high levels of criminal activity if there is a noticeable police presence. In addition, this theory promotes an approach in which police patrols in area that contains high levels of criminal activity and spending 10 to 15 minutes patrols at least every two hours in each area and move in an unpredictable order to increase the perception of the costs of offending in those areas (Weisburd et al., 2014). In accordance with the theory, visibility, and positive engagement of police within those areas that have a high level of criminal activity, enhance public trust and legitimacy, and maximize crime reduction and increase community satisfaction. This theory could enhance policing effectiveness, thereby substantial reducing crime not only in the areas that have a high level of criminal activity, but possibly jurisdiction overall.

Social Exchange Theory. Social Exchange Theory is a model for interpreting society as a series of interactions between the police and the community. Here, an interaction that earns approval from another person is more likely to be repeated than one that provokes disapproval. The theory also posits that the police–community relationship operates as a system of exchange or a give-and-take process. (Crossman, 2020). In relation to the study, police officers earn a high level of public trust when citizens are satisfied with how well they are carrying out their tasks and obligations. They will also be more dedicated to their jobs as police. Similarly, if the police see the public fully supporting and cooperating with any police rules and regulations that make the police's functions more successful and rewarding, the public will be even more supportive and cooperative towards them.

Police Visibility. Police visibility provides the public the feeling of safety. The theory states that police visibility develops a relationship based on trust between the police and the community and deters possible criminal offenders (Borovec, 2019). In line with the study, police presence was a significant factor of both trust in police fairness and effectiveness at the local level. Police trust was higher in districts where police visibility was also higher. Moreover, the people's strong mutual trust relationship with the police allows the police to perform more effectively and efficiently. People do not create a negative relationship with the police when they feel comfortable talking to them. It also serves as a key deterrent to crime by making those who wish to break the law fearful.

Expectancy Theory. Expectancy Theory is based on performance. It suggests that individuals are motivated to do their tasks if they know that their extra performance is appreciated and rewarded (Chris & Wes, 2011). In accordance with the theory, police officers are motivated and engaged to perform their responsibilities well if they believe that doing so will result in a high level of public trust and satisfaction. The public will also be totally supportive and cooperative with any police rules and regulations if they believe that it will empower the police to perform their tasks in a more satisfying manner.

III. RESULTS OR FINDINGS

Level of Trust of the Community to the Philippine National Police Policing in Keeping the Community Safe and Secure from Crime

This part of the paper discusses the trust level of the public to the PNP in keeping the community safe and secure from Crime in the locality of Kibungan.

Table 3.

The level of the trust of the community to the Philippine National Police policing in keeping the community safe and secure from crime.

PUBLIC TRUST ON POLICING	WM	DE
1. The police officers of Kibungan will be able to prevent the commission of crimes.	3.23	Quite a bit of trust
2. The police officers of Kibungan will be able to reduce crimes.	3.21	Quite a bit of trust
3. The police officers of Kibungan can be trusted to apprehend criminals.	3.28	A lot of trust
4. The police officers of Kibungan are reliable in conducting search and seizures.	3.20	Quite a bit of trust
5. The police officers of Kibungan will be able to investigate crimes.	3.34	A lot of trust
6. The police officers of Kibungan will be able to protect life and property.	3.33	A lot of trust
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	3.27	A LOT OF TRUST

The level of the trust of the community to the Philippine National Police policing demonstrates a lot of trust in keeping the community safe and secure with the average weighted mean of 3.27. This findings means that the residents of Kibungan, Benguet see that police officers as trustworthy in the performance of their duties which include crime investigation, protection of lives and property, apprehension of criminals, conducting search and seizure, crime prevention and reduction of crimes. Such high level of trust can be attributed to several factors, including proactive community engagement, visible policing efforts, and successful crime prevention initiatives. One significant contributor to this trust is the active engagement of police officers with the community. When police participate in local events, conduct outreach programs, and maintain a visible presence in neighborhoods, they foster stronger relationships with residents. This visibility not only reassures the community but also encourages open lines of communication, allowing residents to voice their concerns and collaborate with law enforcement on safety issues.

Community policing activities, such as meetings, foot patrols, neighborhood watch, and door-to-door visits, aim to apprehend criminals and investigate crimes; these efforts increase citizens' satisfaction with the police, encourage them to share information about offenses, offenders, and public safety concerns, and foster a sense that the police care about residents' problems, thereby building mutual trust (Yeksel & Tepe, 2013).

In Canada, police rely on ongoing public support and cooperation to perform effectively. Citizens' willingness to report crimes, assist with investigations, call for help, and follow laws and police directions shapes how they view the police. About forty-nine percent of Canadians believed the police were performing well across key measures such as enforcing laws, responding to calls, being approachable and easy to talk to, ensuring public safety, and treating people fairly (Ibrahim, 2020).

In highest, the indicator "the police officers are being able to investigate crimes" garnered a weighted mean of 3.34 and is describe as "A lot of trust". This reflects a strong sense of confidence among the community in the investigative capabilities of their local police force. This suggests that Kibungan residents believe police officers possess the necessary skills, training, and resources to effectively carry out investigations and solve crimes. For example, in a case where a robbery occurs, community members may feel assured that the police will promptly collect evidence, interview witnesses, and employ forensic methods to identify and arrest the suspects..

This also implies that, when the public trusts the police's ability to investigate crimes, community members are more likely to report crimes, provide valuable information, and cooperate with investigations. This collaboration is crucial for timely and effective crime prevention because it enables the police to respond proactively rather than reactively

This is also supported with the Koper Curve Theory stating that crime is less likely to occur in small area that contain high levels of criminal activity if there is a noticeable police presence. In addition, this theory promotes an approach in which police patrols in area that contains high levels of criminal activity and spending 10 to 15 minutes patrols at least every two hours in each area and move in an unpredictable order to increase the perception of the costs of offending in those areas (Weisburd et al., 2014). In accordance with the theory, visibility, and positive engagement of police within those areas that have a high level of criminal activity, enhance public trust and legitimacy, and attain crime reduction and increase the satisfaction of the public. This theory could enhance policing effectiveness, thereby substantial reducing crime not only in the areas that have a high level of criminal activity, but possibly jurisdiction overall.

In lowest, the indicator "the police officers being able to conduct search and seizures" is with the description of a "quite a bit of trust" with a weighted mean of 3.20. This means that the greatest number of residents were putting their trust to the police in terms of capturing anything like contrabands and evidence that are crucial for the administration of justice.

This ranking also suggests that residents may have some confidence in the police's ability to carry out search and seizure operations, but there are underlying concerns or experiences that prevent them from fully endorsing this aspect of police work. For example, if community members have witnessed instances where searches were perceived as invasive or not conducted according

to legal standards, it could lead to hesitation in expressing complete trust.

In relation, public trust in the police is influenced by people's views of safety, past interactions with law enforcement, and past experiences of unfair treatment. Furthermore, the public's trust in the police has decreased as a result of their actions being shown to the public and victims' negative interactions with them. The police, on the other hand, may build trust by treating the individuals in the community and victims of any crime correctly (Ruddell & Trott, 2022). Moreover, public satisfaction with law enforcement has been linked to greater trust in and compliance or cooperation with law enforcement; thus, making it easier for law enforcement officers to do their jobs. When the public is satisfied with police, they are viewed as important in the community.

Furthermore, expectancy theory suggests that individuals are motivated to perform if they know that their extra performance is recognized and rewarded (Chris & Wes, 2011). In accordance with the theory, police officers are motivated and engaged to perform their responsibilities well if they believe that doing so will result in a high satisfaction and trust of the community. The public will also be totally supportive and cooperative with any police rules and regulations if they believe that it will empower the police to perform their tasks in a more satisfying manner.

The Level of Satisfaction of the Respondents in terms of Crime Prevention and Control, Maintenance of the Peace and Order in the Locality

This part provides information regarding the level of public satisfaction to the Philippine National Police in terms of crime prevention and control, and maintenance of the peace and order in the locality of Kibungan.

Table 4.

The level of satisfaction of the respondents in terms of crime prevention and control, maintenance of peace and order in the locality.

PUBLIC SATISFACTION ON POLICING	WM	DE
1. The police officers of Kibungan are conducting patrol (foot and mobile patrol) in the community.	3.21	S
2. The police officers are doing their responsibilities and following the anti-criminality programs made to reduce crimes.	3.23	S
3. The police officers are efficient in arresting criminals.	3.17	S
4. The police officers are able to conduct search and seizure.	3.18	S
5. The police officers are investigating if there are crimes committed.	3.36	VS
6. The police officers are reliable in times of calamities and other related emergencies.	3.36	VS

AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN 3.25 SATISFIED

Overall, the public satisfaction to Kibungan's Philippine National Police is 3.25, which falls under the description of "satisfied". This means that the residents of Kibungan are happy with how the police officers carry out their jobs in terms of crime prevention and control and the maintenance of peace and order in the locality. It also indicates that residents perceive the police as effective in fulfilling their core duties, such as crime prevention, investigation, and maintaining peace and order.

This also indicates that the community generally views the performance and effectiveness of their local police force positively. However, this description suggests that while residents appreciate the efforts made by the police in maintaining order, addressing crime, and engaging with the community, there may still be room for improvement in certain areas.

Cimine et al. (2022) found that respondents felt safe and at ease in their neighborhoods because the police were performing effectively, though some key informants noted concerns about hold-up incidents in Cagayan de Oro City during the survey period. This indicates that the PNP should continue to improve police operations to ensure community safety and security.

Additionally, social exchange theory posits that the police–community relationship operates as an exchange or give-and-take process (Crossman, 2020). Police officers earn a high level of public trust and satisfaction when citizens are satisfied with how well they are carrying out their tasks and obligations. They will also be more dedicated to their jobs as police. Similarly, if the police see the public fully supporting and cooperating with any police rules and regulations that make the police's functions more successful and rewarding, the public will be even more supportive and cooperative towards them.

With the highest weighted mean of 3.36, the indicator "The police officers being reliable in times of calamities" and "The police officers are investigating if there are crimes committed" are described as "very satisfied". This means that respondents can see and observe the presence of PNP in terms of calamity and that the community were able to observed that when there are crimes happening in Kibungan, the police officers were able to investigate such crime immediately and in accordance with the law.

This implies that the people were fulfilled with the services that police officers were giving to the community especially when there are emergencies. Police officers were always alert to respond and rescue in times of calamity and if crime occur, the police were able to conduct the proper investigation that may lead to case being solved.

In corroboration, the public's trust in the police has decreased as a result of their actions being shown to the public and victims' negative interactions with them. The police, on the other hand, may build trust by treating the individuals in the community and victims of any crime correctly (Ruddell & Trott, 2022). Moreover, the indicator "the police officers being able to follow anti-criminality programs to reduce crimes" ranked Now it is the time to articulate the research work with ideas gathered in above steps by adopting any of below suitable approaches:

second with a weighted mean of 3.39 which is described as "satisfied".

This shows that police officers visits households within the community to build trust and open lines of communication. Also, officers distribute informative flyers that provide crime prevention tips and resources, ensuring that residents are well-informed about safety measures they can take. Additionally, the police of Kinungan actively updates its Facebook page with relevant information, such as crime alerts, community events, and safety tips, to keep residents engaged and informed in real-time. This indicates that citizens are happy with police officers when they share important details that can help prevent harm and reduce the commission of crimes.

The community depends on the police to ensure safety and security, while the police rely on community support and cooperation to build an effective rapport. A stronger police–community relationship enhances the police's ability to address crime effectively (Building Police-Community Relationships-Police Reform, n.d.).

Additionally, police visibility is a key factor influencing trust in police fairness and effectiveness at the local level. Police trust was higher in districts where police visibility was also higher. Moreover, the people's strong mutual trust relationship with the police allows the police to perform more effectively and efficiently. People do not create a negative relationship with the police when they feel comfortable talking to them. It also serves as a key deterrent to crime by making those who wish to break the law fearful.

The indicator "the police officers being efficient in arresting criminals" with a weighted mean of 3.17 which is described as "satisfied" is the lowest showing that there is a moderate level of satisfaction among community members in Kibungan. Although this result is categorized as satisfied, it ranks the lowest among the 6 indicators measuring police performance, indicating that there may be significant concerns regarding the effectiveness of arrests.

Aside from that, it suggests that respondents may have reservations about the Kibungan's police's ability to efficiently apprehend offenders. This could stem from various factors, including perceived delays in response times, challenges in gathering sufficient evidence for arrests, or a lack of visible police presence in crime-prone areas. The lower ranking may also reflect community expectations that are not fully met, leading to a sense of dissatisfaction despite an overall positive view of police performance.

Research supports the notion that community perceptions of police efficiency are influenced by various factors, including response times and the visibility of police presence (Tyler, 2004). A study by the Bureau of Justice Statistics highlights that effective policing not only involves making arrests but also requires building trust and rapport within the community to encourage cooperation and information sharing (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2019).

IV. CONCLUSIONS

From the study's findings, the following conclusions can be drawn:

The citizens of Kibungan, Benguet demonstrate strong trust in the Philippine National Police's ability to maintain safety and security within their community. This trust is significantly influenced by the visible presence of police officers, which reassures the public of the PNP's commitment to upholding peace and enforcing the law effectively. Such police visibility not only strengthens public confidence but also fosters a safer environment by deterring criminal activity and encouraging community cooperation in maintaining order.

While the residents of Kibungan generally express satisfaction with the Philippine National Police's efforts in crime prevention, control, and maintaining peace and order, the fact that their satisfaction is not at the highest level—"very satisfied"—suggests that there remain areas where the PNP can enhance its performance. This indicates opportunities for improvement to better address community concerns and expectations, thereby strengthening public confidence and further elevating the quality of police service in the locality. This version clarifies that satisfaction is positive but leaves room for growth, highlighting the importance of continuous improvement to meet higher community standards

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