

Moderating Role of Land Transportation Office Personnel Behavior To The Effectiveness of Law Enforcement Operation On The Perspective Of The Clients

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Abstract

This research aimed to understand the relationship between the performance of law enforcers and the effectiveness of law enforcement operation, focusing on the moderating role of Land Transportation Office (LTO) Personnel Behavior. Quantitative research design was used thru descriptive-correlation analysis. Through random stratified sampling, one hundred twenty (120) respondents from three types of transacting public at Land Transportation Office (i.e., motor vehicle registrants, driver's license applicants and apprehended drivers) were chosen as participants. Data were collected through a structured survey questionnaire and were interpreted. Results revealed that the transacting public gave a favorable high regard with the performance of law enforcers in terms of conducting road safety awareness program, traffic enforcement and apprehension, traffic management and roadside and bus terminal inspection. In terms of effectiveness of law enforcement operation, results showed that there was a high effective perception, leading to the significant relationship between the performance of law enforcers and the law enforcement operation. The results also revealed that the moderating role of LTO Personnel Behavior has been highly accepted by the public and was highly significant but data showed that it weakened the relationship of the performance of law enforcers and the law enforcement operation. Consequently, there is a supreme necessity to improve personnel's behavior since there are issues of bribery and extortion even though the LTO Personnel Behavior has a high accepted by the transacting clients.

Keywords: LTO; enforcement; effectiveness; perspective; behavior

Introduction

Road safety is a critical concern with profound implications for individuals, communities, and society at large. It was indicated that once most drivers pass their test and bin their L-plates, the rules of the road are gradually being forgotten which leads to road crashes (Pepper, 2014).

Road crashes have the potential to cause fatalities, severe injuries, and lifelong disabilities. Approximately 1.35 million people die each year as a result of road traffic accidents. This figure reflects a tragic loss of life and underscores the urgent need for road safety measures, (World Health Organization, 2022).

In the Philippines, road safety falls under the responsibility of Land Transportation Office, (Chanco,

2013). This organization is mandated to register motor vehicles, issue driver's or conductor's licenses and permits, enforce transportation laws, rules and regulations and adjudicate apprehension cases. Their annual reports indicate there has been an increase of 26.25% of apprehended violators for the year 2021, but a decrease of 8.27% for the year 2022. Alarming, there are 45,967 apprehended violators for driving with unregistered motor vehicle while 30,814 with driving without driver's license alone.

The promotion of safety and comfort in land travel is its continuing commitment, (LTO Press Release, 2016). Initiatives from the organization has been dispatched to make the public more aware of the land transportation rules and regulations. Road safety campaign were conducted as requested by the public institutions, local-government units, non-government organizations and transport groups. Traffic enforcement and apprehension are conducted at least three to four times a week, with occasional coordination with local government units or the Philippine National Police (PNP). But despite these efforts, a considerable number of traffic offenders are nevertheless apprehended, raising the question of the agency's efficiency.

There are few existing researches or studies discussing the issues of law enforcement unit of LTO. Upon looking at public comments of LTO Official Facebook Page, LTO had been bombarded with questions about why: 1) most of the law enforcement operations flagged down motorcycle riders only; 2) issues of bribery and extortion; 3) unfair treatment to some motorist especially when apprehended vehicle has connection with a high ranking official. The common denominator of these comments centers at the law enforcers and their behavior during law enforcement operations. This could be one of the reasons that LTO lands in the first and second rank of corrupt agencies according to a study conducted by Santiago, (2017), from 2012-2016 and has the highest number of complaints recorded by the Contact Center Ng Bayan for the years 2013-2015 and 2018-2019; 2016-2017, 2020 (second) and 2021 (fifth).

Though issues of citizen satisfaction, trust and fairness reflect in the data, it is important to evaluate the effectiveness of the law enforcement unit and how the role of law enforcers affect these operations. This study will be based on the perspective of the clients, and will serve as an evaluation depending on their experiences, their perceived satisfaction, fairness and how well they trust these apprehending officers to be consolidated for future references of the agency to improve their policies.

Hence, the variables in this study will be performance of law enforcement operation of Land Transportation Office, the moderating role of its personnel and the effectiveness of the operation.

Materials and Method

This study utilized the descriptive method of research using self-administered questionnaires which were primarily filled up by the respondents. To collect data for this study, a survey questionnaire was used. The questionnaires were distributed to the target respondents and collected on time. The data gathering was carried out to measure variables, namely: (1) the level of performance of law enforcers, (2) LTO personnel's behavior during the conduct of law enforcement operation, and (3) the perceived fairness, trust and citizen satisfaction of LTO Law enforcement operations.

It also employed stratified random sampling technique in using quantitative method. A type of random sampling known as stratified sampling divides a population into smaller subgroups, or strata, based on shared features of the participants. Subgroups were divided for all three services offered by the Land Transportation Office, which were motor vehicle registrants, license applicants and traffic violators settling their fines and penalties.

The instrument utilized in the study consisted of four sections focused on demographic profile of the respondents, performance of law enforcers, client's rating of law enforcer's behavior and level of effectiveness of law enforcement operation of Land Transportation Office.

For the first section, demographic profile of the respondents which comprised of type of LTO transaction respondents acquired, age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, and socio-economic status. Second section composed of four variables that constitutes the performance of law enforcers. Each variable was adapted respectively: road safety awareness program from Hawley et al.'s (2018) "Road safety education for older drivers: Evaluation of a classroom-based training initiative"; traffic enforcement and apprehension, and traffic management from Bagundol (2018), entitled "The Roles of the Traffic Officers in the Maintenance of Order in the National Highway in Maranding as Perceived by the Pedicab Drivers"; and roadside and public utility vehicle inspection from "Alternative Truck and Bus Inspection Strategies" (2006). As per the third section, questions were adopted from Carpio (2020) entitled "Capabilities of Traffic Enforcers in Implementing Traffic Rules and Regulations in Nueva Ecija" and fourth section were adopted from Minnesota Satisfaction Survey.

This study used a 4-level Likert Scale to assess the effectiveness of law enforcement operation of LTO law enforcers through the transacting clients of LTO Sta. Cruz District Office as the respondents where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, and 4 = strongly agree.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. Performance in Law Enforcement Operation

Indicators	M	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Road Safety Awareness Program	3.65	0.44	Highly Performing
Traffic Enforcement and Apprehension	3.62	0.39	Highly Performing
Traffic Management	3.47	0.51	Highly Performing
Roadside and Public Utility Inspection	3.59	0.51	Highly Performing

Legend:

1) 1.00 – 1.75 – least performing; 2) 1.76-2.50 slightly performing; 3) 2.51-3.25 moderately performing; 4) 3.26-4.00 highly performing

Table 1 showed the performance of the law enforcers in their conduct of law enforcement operation. Road safety awareness program has a mean score of 3.65 and a standard deviation of 0.44 while traffic enforcement and apprehension has a mean score of 3.62 and a standard deviation of 0.39. Traffic management resulted with a mean score of 3.47 and roadside and public utility inspection has a mean score of 3.59. Both has a standard deviation of 0.51. Data shows that every variable used has a Highly Performing verbal interpretation.

Data showed that the perceived rating with regards to the performance of the law enforcers are considerably high performing. This can be attributed to the fact that when road user depicts the law enforcement operation to have a mutual benefit, especially for community, they depict as the law enforcers to be performing well leading to significantly reduce accidents and promote responsible road behavior, (Kapur, 2023).

Table 2. Client's Rating of LTO Personnel Behavior

Indicators	M	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Professionalism	3.50	0.56	Highly Acceptable
Communication Skills	3.54	0.52	Highly Acceptable
Adherence to Protocol	3.53	0.55	Highly Acceptable

Legend:

- 1) 1.00 – 1.75 – least acceptable; 2) 1.76-2.50 slightly acceptable; 3) 2.51-3.25 moderately acceptable; 4) 3.26-4.00 highly acceptable

Indicated in Table 2, all of the characteristics that were used to gauge how law enforcers should behaved while conducting operations are shown in Table 2. The mean score for professionalism is 3.50 with a standard deviation of 0.56, while the mean score for communication skills is 3.54 with a standard deviation of 0.52. The mean score for protocol adherence is 3.53, with a standard variation of 0.55. Data indicates that there is a Highly Acceptable verbal interpretation for each variable used.

This can be supported by a research study by Carpio, (2020), wherein commuters perceived traffic enforcers as displaying good attitude, knowledgeable and skilled. Communication skills is very important in interacting with the road users leading to an effective and well-informed motorist about the safety and security they must feel while they are on the road.

Table 3. Overall Level of Agreement of Effectiveness of Law Enforcement Operation

Indicators	M	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Perceived Trust	3.52	0.58	Highly Effective
Perceived Fairness	3.53	0.59	Highly Effective
Perceived Satisfaction	3.52	0.58	Highly Effective

Legend:

- 1) 1.00 – 1.75 – least effective; 2) 1.76-2.50 slightly effective; 3) 2.51-3.25 moderately effective; 4) 3.26-4.00 highly effective

Table 3 displayed all of the criteria that were utilized to determine how successful the Land Transportation Office, Santa Cruz District Office law enforcement operation was. Perceived trust has a mean score of 3.52 with a standard deviation of 0.58 while perceived fairness has a mean score of 3.53 with a standard deviation of 0.59. With a standard deviation of 0.58, the mean score for subjective satisfaction is 3.52. Data showed that each variable employed has a Highly Effective verbal interpretation.

Data showed that respondents considered the law enforcement operation of Land Transportation Office as highly effective. This means that the objective of the function is greeted and appreciated by the community. This can lessen the rapidly increasing number of road crashes and fatalities that can be avoided if road users are well-equipped with proper information regarding road safety, traffic laws, rules and regulations through strict traffic enforcement, apprehension, with additional traffic management and roadside inspection. This can be attributed that citizen participation has a large role to portray in conveying messages to the authorities as cited by Hall and Lowman, (2017), that voices are the perception that an individuals' side of a story must be heard.

Table 4. Correlation of Performance and Overall Effectiveness of Law Enforcement Operation

Performance of LEO	Overall effectiveness of LEO		
	Trust	Fairness	Satisfaction
Road Safety Awareness Program	.562**	.550**	.535**
Traffic Enforcement and Apprehension	.540**	.503**	.559**
Traffic Management	.590**	.710**	.715**
Roadside and Public Utility Inspection	.566**	.725**	.685**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Legend:

1) .00 - .19 – very weak; 2) .20 - .39 – weak; 3) .40 - .59 – moderate; 4) .60 - .79 – strong; .80 – 1.00 – very strong;

As shown in Table 4, performance of law enforcers and the overall effectiveness of law enforcement operation has significant relationship. Data showed that road safety awareness program has a moderate coefficient with trust, fairness and satisfaction. The coefficient value is 0.562 for trust, which means that respondents that the road safety awareness makes the respondents trust the law enforcers. With regards to fairness, the coefficient value is 0.550 which means that the road safety awareness makes the respondents increase the level of fairness with the law enforcers during their conduct of law enforcement operation. As for the satisfaction with coefficient value of 0.535, respondents had been satisfied with the law enforcement operation making the road safety awareness program deemed necessary in contributing to the overall effectiveness of law enforcement operation of Land Transportation Office Santa Cruz District Office.

According to data, there is a moderate correlation between traffic enforcement and apprehension and satisfaction, fairness, and trust. With a coefficient value of 0.540 for trust, respondents indicate that they have faith in law enforcement to enforce traffic laws. Respondent can trust law enforcers during their conduct of law enforcement operation and the feel of security had been established, that no harm can be depicted during operations. In terms of fairness, the respondents' level of fairness with law enforcement during their conduct of law enforcement operations increases as a result of traffic enforcement and apprehension, according to the coefficient value of 0.503. With this, data showed that respondents depicted law enforcers are fair when apprehending violators and proper infractions are imposed. Regarding the satisfaction coefficient of 0.559, it indicates that the respondents were content with the law enforcement operation, which included traffic enforcement and apprehension as a necessity to enhance the overall effectiveness of the Land Transportation Office Santa Cruz District Office's law enforcement operation.

Data in Table 24 also indicates that satisfaction, fairness, and trust are correlated with traffic management. Respondents' moderate trust coefficient value of 0.590 shows that they have confidence in law enforcement's ability to manage traffic. Respondents can have confidence in law enforcement when it comes to traffic control, since they have established security and no harm can be shown while activities are underway. The strong coefficient value of 0.710 indicates that, in terms of fairness, traffic management raises the respondents' degree of fairness with law enforcement when they execute law enforcement operations. They seemed to believe that law enforcers are fair when managing traffic flow and heavy congestion are addressed fairly. The respondents appeared to be satisfied with the law enforcement operation, which included traffic management as a necessary measure, as evidenced by the satisfaction coefficient of 0.715. This is a

strong coefficient wherein respondents are satisfied with the traffic management of the law enforcers.

Roadside and public utility inspections are significant with satisfaction, justice, and trust, according to data in Table 24. The moderate trust coefficient value of 0.566 among the respondents indicates their confidence in the roadside and public utility inspection conducted by law enforcement. When it comes to roadside and public utility inspections, respondents can have faith in law enforcement because they believe that these inspections will ensure that the public utility vehicles are safe for transportation. Roadside and public utility inspections increase respondents' perceptions of fairness toward law enforcement when they carry out law enforcement operations, according to the strong coefficient value of 0.725. The public commuters must be safe when using transportation services, and they appeared to think that law enforcement officers are being fair when they inspect these public utility vehicles to make sure that all qualified drivers and vehicles are ready for transport and that those who are not qualified drivers and vehicles are not permitted to continue operating. The strong satisfaction coefficient of 0.685 suggests that the respondents were content with the law enforcement operation, which included roadside and public utility inspection as a necessary step. This is a high coefficient indicating that respondents are happy with the law enforcement officers' roadside and public utility inspections. As cited by Hall and Lowman, (2017) fairness and consistency are essential component of any law enforcement operation. This means that the fairness, alongside trust and satisfaction are important when law enforcers conducted their law enforcement operation.

Table 5. Moderation Analysis of Effectiveness of Law Enforcement Operation by Satisfaction of LTO Personnel Behavior in terms of Professionalism

	Estimates	SE	95% Confidence Interval		t	p
			Lower	Upper		
Performance in Law Enforcement Operation	0.6085	0.1141	0.3825	0.8344	5.3329	0.0000
Professionalism	0.2005	0.0757	0.0506	0.3503	2.6497	0.0092
Performance * Professionalism	-0.4243	0.0828	-0.5883	-0.2603	-5.1247	0.0000

Table 5 presented the moderation analysis conducted using SPSS's PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013). Based on the Table 5, the interaction between performance of law enforcers and client's rating of LTO Personnel Behavior was significant ($b = -.4243$, $SE = .0828$, $t = -5.1247$, $p < .05$), but negatively. Since according to Table 24 there is a significant correlation between the performance of law enforcers and the overall effectiveness of law enforcement operation, when injected with professionalism, it negatively or weakens that correlation. Based on Table 25, beta ($b = -.4243$) can be interpreted that for every 1 point of performance, there is a decreasing 0.4243 points for professionalism, or for every one point for professionalism, there is a decrease of 0.4243 points for every performance, indicating that the relationship between the performance and effectiveness of law enforcement operations was negatively moderated by their client's rating of the professionalism conveyed by the law enforcers. The simple slope of performance on effectiveness was significant at high ($t = 2.9581$, $p < .05$), average ($t = 4.3365$, $p < .05$), and low ($t = 7.6472$, $p < .05$) levels of overall effectiveness of law enforcement operations.

This means that the professionalism expressed by the law enforcers moderates their performance of law enforcement operation to the effectiveness of law enforcement operation. The simple slope analysis indicates that professionalism is positive among the respondents allowing traffic enforcers to have a smooth conversation towards a violator which they tend to address, (Paje et. al., 2022), though for this study, it

weakens the relationship between the performance of law enforcers and the law enforcement operation.

Table 6. Moderation Analysis of Effectiveness of Law Enforcement Operation by Satisfaction of LTO Personnel Behavior in terms of Communication Skills

	Estimates	SE	95% Confidence Interval		t	p
			Lower	Upper		
Performance in Law Enforcement Operation	0.6179	0.1135	0.393	0.8428	5.4421	0.0000
Communication skills	0.2718	0.0893	0.0948	0.4487	3.0423	0.0029
Performance * Communication skills	-0.2774	0.0829	-0.4417	-0.1131	-3.3447	0.0011

Table 6 showed the moderation analysis using SPSS's PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013). The interaction between performance of law enforcers and client's rating of LTO Personnel behavior in terms of communication skills was significant ($b = -.2774$, $SE = .0829$, $t = -3.3447$, $p < .05$), but also negatively. Since according to Table 24 there is a significant correlation between the performance of law enforcers and the overall effectiveness of law enforcement operation, when injected with communication skills, it negatively or weakens that correlation. Based on Table 26, beta ($b = -.2774$) can be interpreted that for every 1 point of performance, there is a decreasing 0.4243 points for communication skills, or for every one point for communication skills, there is a decrease of 0.2774 points for every performance, indicating that the relationship between the performance and effectiveness of law enforcement operations was negatively moderated by their client's rating of the communication skills conveyed by the law enforcers. The simple slope of performance on effectiveness was significant at high ($t = 3.8544$, $p < .05$), average ($t = 4.5477$, $p < .05$), and low ($t = 6.7828$, $p < .05$) levels of overall effectiveness of law enforcement operations.

The simple slope analysis indicates that the law enforcement officers' communication abilities influence well they carry out their duties and how effective they are. It is clear that effective communication skills help traffic enforcers manage and resolve conflicts that arise during law enforcement operations, though for this study, it weakens the relationship between the performance of law enforcers and the law enforcement operation.

Table 7. Moderation Analysis of Effectiveness of Law Enforcement Operation by Satisfaction of LTO Personnel Behavior in terms of Adherence to Protocol

	Estimates	SE	95% Confidence Interval		t	p
			Lower	Upper		
Performance in LEO	0.5953	0.0966	0.404	0.7866	6.1639	0.0000
adherence to protocol	0.2981	0.0729	0.1538	0.4425	4.0912	0.0001
Performance * adherence to protocol	-0.3142	0.0782	-0.4691	-0.1594	-4.0200	0.0001

Table 7 showed the moderation analysis using SPSS's PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013). The interaction between performance of law enforcers and client's rating of LTO Personnel behavior in terms of adherence to protocol was significant ($b = -.3142$, $SE = .0782$, $t = -4.0200$, $p < .05$), but also negatively. Since

according to Table 24 there is a significant correlation between the performance of law enforcers and the overall effectiveness of law enforcement operation, when injected with adherence to protocol, it negatively or weakens that correlation. Based on Table 27, beta ($b = -0.3142$) can be interpreted that for every 1 point of performance, there is a decreasing 0.3142 points for adherence to protocol, or for every one point for communication skills, there is a decrease of 0.3142 points for every performance, indicating that the relationship between the performance and effectiveness of law enforcement operations was negatively moderated by their client's rating of the adherence to protocol conveyed by the law enforcers. The simple slope of performance on effectiveness was significant at high ($t = 4.0319$, $p < .05$), average ($t = 4.9267$, $p < .05$), and low ($t = 7.8997$, $p < .05$) levels of overall effectiveness of law enforcement operations.

This suggests that the effectiveness of law enforcement operation is influenced by their compliance to protocol through the simple slope analysis, but for this study, it weakens the relationship between the performance of law enforcers and the law enforcement operation. In order to maintain public trust, road safety, and the fairness and consistency of the traffic enforcement process, it is important to adhere to the method along with other factors.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, most of the respondents are adult, single, male, from lower class but are college graduates. Many of them are drivers, non-government employees and has no eligibility but they are one to three years in service.

Clients perceived law enforcers are highly performing while conducting law enforcement operation, while perceived the law enforcement operation as highly effective. This is aligned with the Deterrence Theory pertaining deterrence theory suggest that a road user is less likely to commit a violation when he/she perceived the fines, penalties or risks or the harmonious or perceived security when he/follows the traffic laws, rules and regulations. Furthermore, law enforcers play as deterrent that when a motorist caught sight an enforcer, he/she most likely to shift to safe driving. Law enforcers play a crucial role in this study. The relationship is evident that when law enforcers are highly performing, the effectiveness of law enforcement are being served to the public, reaching its objective to be done. Without our law enforcers, no seminar will be conducted to increase a driver's knowledge about traffic rules and road safety, no deterrent authorities and no traffic management leading to chaotic incidents, and no one will inspect public utility vehicles that ensures the safety of the commuters. With regards to this, the researcher's hypothesis is hereby rejected due to the significant relationship between the performance of law enforcers and the effectiveness of law enforcement operation.

The behavior of the law enforcers during conduct of law enforcement operations are highly acceptable as per respondents. This makes the law enforcement operation more effective since when clients perceived that the law enforcers show high level of professionalism, effective communication skills and vigilant and firm adherence to procedure, drivers are more encouraged to comply the traffic laws, rules and regulations as Trait Theory implies. But this the nature of the behavior measured in this study. Many respondents agreed that the law enforcers had highly acceptable behavior. Statistically, the moderating effect of LTO Personnel Behavior weakens that relationship between the performance of law enforcers and the overall effectiveness of law enforcement operation. Thus, the researcher's hypothesis is hereby rejected.

Recommendation

The recommendations of the study are as follows:

1. Demographic profile has not been considered as a variable for this study, but for profiling purposes only. Data shows that most of the respondents are non-government employee and has no eligibility. These can be a factor to further examine the relationship of the performance of law enforcers and the effectiveness of law enforcement operation to fully understand how enforcers are aware of the accountability they hold while conducting law enforcement operation. Future researchers can determine whether respondents' empathy might increase their understand of our law enforcers.

2. In this study, the nature of the LTO Personnel Behavior which is good in nature, had thought to strengthen the relationship between the performance of the law enforcers and the overall effectiveness of law enforcement operation. But statistically, it weakens that relationship. Future researchers can identify the problem that this study acquired to help future researchers understand the moderating variable of LTO Personnel Behavior.

3. One of the reason the researcher see that the moderating variable fails to strengthen the relation between law enforcer's performance and the overall effectiveness of law enforcement operation is the issue of bribery and extortion among law enforcer. Out of 120 respondents, 10 respondents answered the number 5 indicator (i.e. LTO Officers shows no sign of that they can be bribed while apprehending a violator) for measuring professionalism and 9 respondents answered the number 5 indicator (i.e. LTO Officers issue traffic ticket showing no sign they can be bribed by the violator) for measuring adherence to protocol marked them with the rating of 2 or they disagreed. Though majority of them are satisfied, there are perception that these law enforcers can be bribed and/extorted in exchange of non-issuance of traffic citations or perhaps they had experienced them. Future researchers can also conduct study through qualitative research methods about these issues.

4. Factors that can affect enforcer's behavior can also be a subject for future researchers. Since this study used only three kinds of behavior, future researchers can identify which behavior can also serve as a moderating variable in the light that this study will be enhanced. With these, future researchers can identify what affects our enforcers that there are some thinks that law enforcers and their operation should be avoided.

Acknowledgements

These and the Reference headings are in bold but have no numbers. Text below continues as normal.

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