

The Level of Trust of the Community towards Public and Private Security

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Abstract:- The purpose of this research study was to assess the level of trust given by the community to the private security and police personnel for public safety in the Municipality of San Nicolas.

The theoretical framework of this research was anchored on social trust theory and institutional trust theory. Social trust theory indicates that social support is an important concept in this theory. When individuals perceive a high level of social support, they hold a high level of trust in society, which motivates them toward positive behavior. While the institutional trust, citizens expect institutions to perform efficiently, effectively, fairly and ethically in accordance with the roles assigned to them by law or with social norms in the eyes of citizens.

The study employed a mixed methods research design and descriptive type data analysis used to describe the level of trust and factors affecting the trust of the community towards private security and police personnel for public safety. Data were collected from 25 respondents, selected randomly from the Municipality of San Nicolas. Moreover, structured survey questionnaire and an open-ended interview was also used to enrich the information in respondents' own words on the factors affecting their trust to the private security and police personnel.

As a result, the level of trust of the community towards private security for public safety is, majority appeared to be Strongly Agree. The respondents stated that, they are satisfied that the private security is doing their job well and they are willing to cooperate with them if necessary. Further, respondent also agreed that they felt secured with the presence of private security. However, in an open-ended interview, respondents were asked about their experience and how did it affect their trust towards the private security and police personnel. Respondents were able to mention their concerns specifically on the unfair treatment; sense of responsibility; communication and their expectation to public safety. Hence, the researcher suggested that performance evaluation is imperative to provide guidance on measuring trust within community level to set a room for personnel's attitude and work reliability improvement. Because it is believed that, a police force that fails to secure public trust and establish its legitimacy simply does not function effectively (Hough & Roberts, 2004).

Keywords:- Level of trust; performance evaluation; public trust; private security; police personnel.

I. INTRODUCTION

Community trust is an established and highly honored relationship between an agency and the citizens it has been entrusted to serve. It is the key to effective policing, and law enforcement executives bear the primary responsibility for their departments' honesty, integrity, legitimacy, and competence (Police Integrity, 1997). To build community trust, it is incumbent on the chiefs of police and managing supervisors to foster an environment within their departments in which ethical behavior is expected and each individual is responsible for meeting those expectations (Police Accountability and Citizen Review, 2002).

Public trust in police can enhance police effectiveness and the legitimacy of police actions (Lea and Young, 1984; Lyons, 2002; Sunshine and Tyler, 2003; National Research Council, 2004). It is linked therefore to the capacity of state police to provide basic citizen security (Goldsmith, 2003). Trust, through its presumption of benevolence, dedication and a shared ethical framework (Six, 2003), also enables police legitimacy 'the judgments that ordinary citizens make about the rightfulness of police conduct and the organizations that employ and supervise them' (National Research Council, 2004: 291). When the public views police as legitimate (or trustworthy), public co-operation with police in ways that assist effectiveness is more likely.

II. RESEARCH PROBLEM

Generally, the society has been more vocal in expressing distrust to our public and private security provider of public safety. This has remained a challenge in all aspects of our daily lives and trust in the institution that should keep us safe. Many citizens may not feel or perceive themselves even more uncomfortable and unsafe in the presence of private security or police personnel. As stated by Hardin (1998), the first result of lawfulness is "trust" which means that the existence of law enables people to trust. Hence, this study attempts to discover how community trust will affect their confidence; or will it change their perception to the compliance of the laws.

III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this study is not only to assess the level of trust of the community to the private security and police personnel for public safety but also to arrive a solution in shaping and building a strong community trust by proposing an action plan. A plan that will positively impact the level of protection of life and property. To increase the prevention and detection rates of crimes. And will enhance public confidence and satisfaction of public safety services given by private security and police personnel.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The aim of this study is to assess the trust of the community to the police and private security for public safety.

- What is the level of trust of the community to the police for public safety?
- What is the level of trust of the community to the private security for public safety?
- What are the factors affecting the level of trust of the community to the police and private security for public safety?

V. DEFINE KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

The following phrase are defined on its operational terminologies.

- **Community Trust.** It is a highly honored relationship between an agency and the citizens it has been entrusted to serve. It is the key to effective policing, and law enforcement executives bear the primary responsibility for their departments’ honesty, integrity, legitimacy, and competence (Police Integrity, 1997)
- **Private Security.** It is a security offered by private companies responsible for protecting institutions and critical infrastructure systems, protecting intellectual property and sensitive corporate information and the like (The Private Security Industry, 2010)
- **Police.** Is defined as a civil force of a national or local government, responsible for the prevention and detection of crime and the maintenance of public order (merriamwebster).
- **Public Safety.** It involves in protecting the public-safeguarding people from crimes, disaster and other potential dangers and threats. This may also include; to prepare, integrate, coordinate and supervise all plans, programs, projects and activities of the local government

C. Conceptual Framework

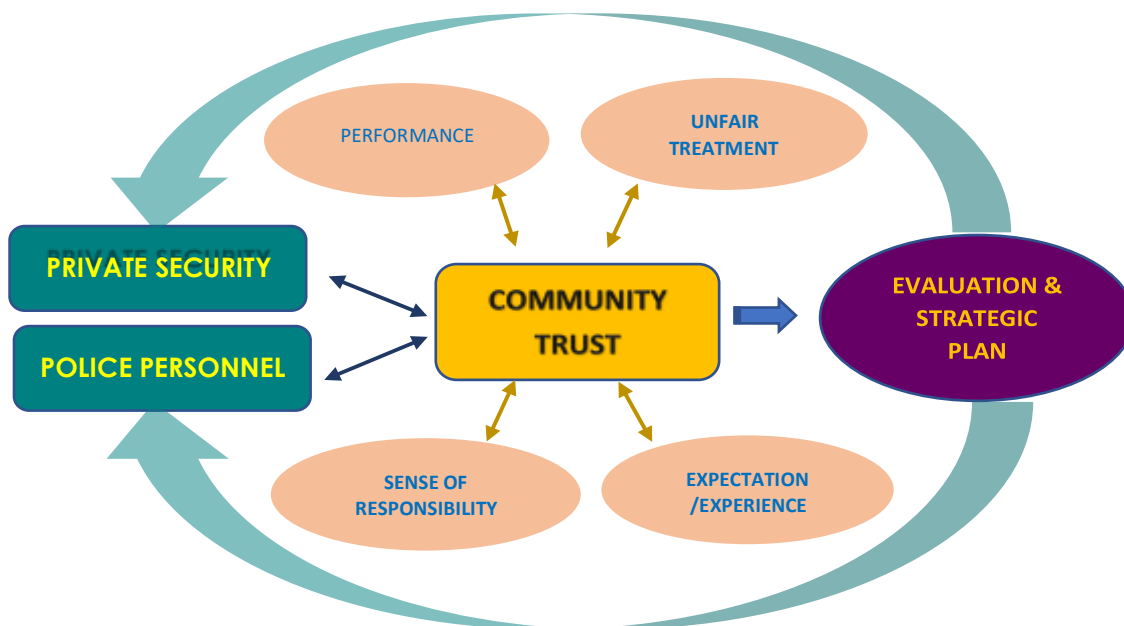


Fig. 1

relative to the promotion and maintenance of peace and order and the protection of life, liberty and property (PNA).

VI. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The study covers and only limited to assess the level of trust of the community to the police and private security for public safety in the Municipality of San Nicolas. The main source of data are 10 residents of the said Municipality.

VII. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. Social trust theory

This theory refers to an individual's beliefs about the general trustworthiness of others and it is part of a person's worldview regarding the benevolence of other human beings. It is perceived that social support is an important concept in this theory. When individuals perceive a high level of social support, they hold a high level of trust in society, which motivates them toward positive behavior. Thus, these people are more integrated and active in their communities and engage in pro-social behavior.

B. Institutional Trust

Institutional trust is the confidence of citizens in institutions. Citizens expect institutions to perform efficiently, effectively, fairly, and ethically in accordance with the roles assigned to them by law or with social norms in the eyes of citizens (Newton 2006; Kelleher and Wolak 2007; Warren 1999). People’s trust in institutions is not the same kind of trust as that between each other as individuals. It is generally learned indirectly and at a distance, usually through the media and social intercourse (Newton 2013 and is based on an evaluation of the performance of institutional functions.

The conceptual framework describes that the trust of the community to the public and private security is based from the personnel’s service and attitude towards the respondents. Community trust is measured thru survey questionnaire and an open-ended interview stating the respondent’s experience in security, as a result, it indicates various factors that affects the respondent’s level of trust. Thus, thru evaluation and implementation of strategized responsibility is purposely use to determine whether security services are equally served and how these respondents perceived their safety and trust. In this manner, police and private security shall improve their behavior and attitudes that will definitely win the trust of the community. Believing the theory of social trust, that, trust gives shape to a person’s worldwide and affect his or her attitude and behavior (Lange et al., 2013).

Social trust is believed to shape a person's worldview and affect his or her attitudes and behavior (Lange et al., 2013). Justwan et al. (2018) reviewed STT literature and

summarized individual-level consequences of social trust. These authors found that STT has been used to discuss individuals' social interaction, economic trade and public health behavior.

VIII. METHODOLOGY

The researcher utilized the descriptive type data analysis using the mixed methods to describe the level of trust and factors affecting the trust of the community towards private security and police personnel for public safety. Data were collected from 25 respondents, selected randomly from the Municipality of San Nicolas.

Moreover, structured survey questionnaire and an open-ended interview was also used to enrich the information in respondents’ own words on the factors affecting their trust to the private security and police personnel. The study used the weighted mean and a four-point Likert scale to analyze and describe the data gathered.

Provided below is the statistical treatment of the data;

Point Value	Range of Values	Interpretation of the Level of Trust	Descriptor of the Level of Trust
4	3.51-4.50	Strongly Agree	Experienced and expectation have met
3	2.51-3.50	Agree	Expectation have met but not satisfied
2	1.51-2.50	Disagree	Experienced and not satisfied
1	1.0-1.50	Strongly Disagree	Not satisfied and expectation have not met

IX. RESULTS, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

In this section, analysis and interpretation of data is presented.

The level of trust of the community towards private security for public safety is, majority appeared to be

Strongly Agree. The respondents stated that, they are satisfied that the private security is doing their job well and they are willing to cooperate with them if necessary. Further, respondent also agreed that they felt secured with the presence of private security.

Indicators	Descriptive Interpretation	
	Mean	
I felt that the police personnel treat me with dignity and respect.	3.6	Strongly Agree
I am satisfied that they are doing their job well.	3.8	Strongly Agree
I felt confident when communicating with them.	3.6	Strongly Agree
I am willing to cooperate with them if necessary.	3.8	Strongly Agree
Call for them to report crime and suspicious activity.	3.6	Strongly Agree
I felt that police personnel try to be fair in solving problems that concerns me.	3.3	Agree
I felt secured of their presence.	3.2	Agree

Table 2: The level of trust of the community towards private security for public safety

As perceived in table 2, there are 2 indicators appeared to have the highest mean of 3.8, the *I am satisfied that they are doing their job well and I am willing to cooperate with them if necessary*, with a descriptive interpretation of Strongly Agree. Meanwhile, indicators, *I felt that the police personnel treat me with dignity and respect, I felt confident when communicating with them, call for them to report crime and suspicious activity* garnered a mean of 3.6 with a descriptive interpretation of Strongly Agree. Moreover, the

indicator *I felt that police personnel try to be fair in solving problems that concerns me* with a mean of 3.3 and 3.2 for *I felt secured of their presence* with a descriptive interpretation of Agree. Private security is essential to ensuring the security and safety of persons and property, as well as intellectual property and sensitive corporate information. Private security officers are responsible for protecting many of the nation institutions and critical infrastructure systems, including industry and

manufacturing, utilities, transportation, and health and educational facilities. These services are used in a wide range of markets, from commercial to residential

The level of trust of the community towards police personnel for public safety garnered the majority of Strongly Agree wherein respondents prefer to Call for the police personnel in reporting crimes and suspicious activity and some agreed that, they are satisfied that the police personnel are doing their job well.

Table shows that, the highest mean of 4.0 indicates that the respondents would prefer to *call for the police personnel to report crime and suspicious activity*, followed by *I am willing to cooperate with them if necessary* with a mean of 3.9, *I felt that the police personnel treat me with dignity and respect* and *I felt secured of their presence* with both mean of 3.6 all garnered the descriptive interpretation of Strongly Agree. Meanwhile, indicators *I felt that police personnel try to be fair in solving problems that concerns me* with a mean of 3.5, *I felt confident when communicating with them* with a mean of 3.3, *I am satisfied that they are doing their job* with a mean of 3.0 garnered a descriptive interpretation of Agree. Public trust is a core requirement to secure the cooperation of public with the police and the compliance to the law (Jackson & Bradford, 2010). It is considered as a social foundation and if coupled with other elements such as arm

and resources (Newton, 1999) become a coherent power to rule. Jackson & Bradford (2010) see the need to measure the trustworthiness of the police for the police to execute its role as a civic guardian who secures public respect. They can do these when they embody community values.

X. FACTORS AFFECTING THE LEVEL OF TRUST OF THE COMMUNITY TO THE POLICE AND PRIVATE SECURITY FOR PUBLIC SAFETY

In an open-ended interview, respondents were asked about their experience and how did it affect their trust towards the private security and police personnel. Respondents were able to mention their concerns specifically on the unfair treatment; sense of responsibility; communication and their expectation to public safety.

One respondent stated that;

“Up to now, my trust towards police personnel was not yet ratified. Especially on the enforcement of their duties and responsibilities because based on my experience in our town, police officers are just present if they will take photos for their reports. I’m expecting that they can already enforce their duties and responsibilities for our town was small but we always have problems in terms of their immediate response and being active in enforcing their duties and responsibilities. Further, in terms of enforcing

Indicators

Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
3.6	Strongly Agree
3.0	Agree
3.3	Agree
3.9	Strongly Agree
4.0	Strongly Agree
3.5	Agree
3.6	Strongly Agree

- I felt that the police personnel treat me with dignity and respect.
- I am satisfied that they are doing their job well.
- I felt confident when communicating with them.
- I am willing to cooperate with them if necessary.
- Call for them to report crime and suspicious activity.
- I felt that police personnel try to be fair in solving problems that concerns me.
- I felt secured of their presence.

Table 3: The level of trust of the community towards police personnel for public safety

the law just and equal, feels like they only protecting politicians and persons with reputation.”

In contrary, a respondent also said;

“As a member of the community my trust to the private security, they are more responsible to their duties in terms of public safety. I know that they are not just doing their job alone, but considering people’s situation in any circumstance.”

Respondent states;

“Police personnel and private security shall maintain their communication and good relationship with the community. Because, as I observed from the news, thou they are both governed by the same principles of public safety, people were still left with fear. I can say that I do not fully trust them.”

Another respondent said;

“Some do their job, some just don’t. I’d expect that they perform their responsibilities, however, they just don’t do as they supposed to act.”

XI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, although the trust level of the community has a strong indication of safety and security based from the gathered data. For some, they find it difficult to attest that they feel protected as mentioned on the factors affecting their trust. Basically, community trust is primarily guided by their satisfaction with their experiences and their expectations whether or not been met. Trust may depend on the nature of encounter experience and the manner of interactions made by private and public officers towards the community. Some authors suggest that, those who have positive experiences in their contact with police and feel the police have treated them fairly and politely view the police

positively (Engel, 2005; Sunshine and Tyler, 2003; Tyler and Huo, 2002). Community experiences on the performance of public and private security services can influence the level of trust to an agency/institution. It is also reasonable to believe that when a police force fails to secure public trust and does not display sense of respect no matter how competent they are, community trust erodes.

XII. RECOMMENDATION

Leading by example reinforce the credibility of an institution. It is highly recommended that a good and high standard of behavior catches the heart of the public where trust is built. Service shall deliver with respect to the fairness of policy provision and outcomes. Performance evaluation is imperative to provide guidance on measuring trust within community level to set a room for personnel's attitude and work reliability improvement. Because it is believed that, a police force that fails to secure public trust and establish its legitimacy simply does not function effectively (Hough & Roberts, 2004)

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