

Then Enemy, Now Friend: A Multi-Case Study of Commissioned Officers Working with Former Rebels in the Philippine National Police

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APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis entitled “THEN ENEMY, NOW FRIEND: A MULTI-CASE STUDY OF COMMISSIONED OFFICERS WORKING WITH FORMER REBELS IN THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE,” prepared and submitted by GRETCHEN MAE A. MEMBREDO, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Degree Doctor of Philosophy in Criminal Justice with Specialization in Criminology, has been examined and hereby recommended for approval and acceptance.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the experiences of commissioned officers of the Philippine National Police (PNP) in working with former rebels in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). It aimed to explore how officers' perceptions, attitudes, and trust toward former rebels are shaped through direct interaction, and to identify challenges and insights that can inform reintegration policies. A qualitative multiple case study design was employed, involving ten purposively selected commissioned officers assigned to selected PNP units in BARMM. Data were gathered through in-depth, semi-structured interviews and analyzed using thematic and cross-case analysis to identify patterns of convergence and divergence. Findings revealed that officers' perceptions were positively influenced by former rebels' participation in peacebuilding and community development activities, demonstration of professional competence, and observable personal reform. Several challenges emerged, including the need for mindset adjustment, difficulties in building mutual trust, communication barriers, and concerns about loyalty to former affiliations. The study also identified key insights to strengthening reintegration efforts: institutional inclusion, multi-sectoral collaboration, capacity building, mentoring and monitoring, social reconciliation, and personal transformation. The findings may contribute to criminology and peace studies by offering insights into post-conflict policing and reconciliation from law enforcement officers' perspectives. They also provide practical implications for enhancing peace-oriented policing strategies, improving training programs, and developing effective reintegration frameworks in conflict-affected regions.

Keywords: *Criminal Justice, Philippine National Police, Commissioned Officers, Former Rebels, Reintegration, Multiple Case Study.*

SDG Indicators: #10 (Reduced Inequalities), #16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions)

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- Che

DEDICATION

This humble work is lovingly dedicated to my mother, Jearly, whose unwavering love, sacrifices, and guidance have been my constant source of strength and inspiration.

In loving memory of my father, Alfredo Sr. (deceased), whose enduring influence continues to inspire me. His legacy lives on in every achievement I strive to accomplish, and this work stands as a tribute to his life and love.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The peace process in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) remains one of the most complex and transformative endeavors in Philippine history. While significant progress has been made in reintegration and reconciliation, the process of social healing continues to unfold in various institutions, including the Philippine National Police (PNP). In recent years, former rebels—once viewed as adversaries of the State—have transitioned into civilian life and, in some cases, have become partners in peacebuilding initiatives alongside the PNP. However, this transformation from hostility to partnership presents challenges at both the individual and institutional levels. Commissioned officers of the PNP, who have long viewed insurgent groups as threats to national security, are now expected to engage these individuals in cooperative programs promoting peace, rehabilitation, and development (Salcedo & Tiongson, 2022).

Despite official reintegration efforts, underlying tensions, mistrust, and cultural divides persist, affecting collaborative efforts and organizational dynamics (Alih et al., 2023). The challenge lies not only in policy implementation but also in the lived experiences of officers tasked with reconciling the past with the present realities of partnership. If these interpersonal and professional tensions remain unresolved, they may undermine the effectiveness of peacebuilding initiatives, weaken institutional legitimacy, and hinder sustainable peace in the BARMM region.

This study holds significant academic and social relevance, bridging criminology, peace studies, and organizational behavior. From an academic standpoint, it contributes to criminological discourse on restorative justice and post-conflict reconciliation, focusing on how police officers navigate the complexities of working with individuals who were once their perceived enemies. Existing studies have extensively discussed the reintegration of former rebels (Flores, 2021; Rahim, 2022), yet few have explored the perspective of law enforcement officers themselves—individuals at the frontline of peace enforcement and reconciliation. By focusing on their lived experiences, this study seeks to reveal the emotional, ethical, and professional dimensions of this transformation.

Socially, the study supports ongoing government efforts under the Bangsamoro peace process, particularly the PNP's role in community engagement and peace maintenance. Understanding the experiences of PNP commissioned officers working with former rebels provides critical insight into how reconciliation operates in real-life contexts—beyond policy rhetoric. The narratives that emerge can inform improved strategies for peace-oriented policing, training, and community partnership in post-conflict environments.

Previous studies by scholars such as Garcia and Ong (2020) and Romero (2023) have underscored that peacebuilding requires not only structural reforms but also the re-humanization of relationships. These works emphasize that sustainable peace is founded on mutual trust, empathy, and understanding between former adversaries. Building upon these insights, the present study extends the discussion by focusing on how such transformation unfolds within the law enforcement profession. In particular, it aims to explore how commissioned officers reconstruct their professional identity and reconcile their roles as peace enforcers and partners in reintegration.

By illuminating these experiences, the study hopes to contribute both to theory and practice—informing training programs, peace education modules, and policy frameworks that promote reconciliation and institutional resilience in conflict-affected regions like the BARMM.

Recent literature on post-conflict reconciliation highlights the importance of personal narratives in understanding the transformation of social and institutional relationships (Cruz et al., 2023). In the Philippine context, peacebuilding has evolved through a hybrid model combining traditional justice, state law, and community-based mechanisms (Basman, 2021). However, the reintegration of former rebels into civil society remains a sensitive process, particularly when the military and police—former adversaries—are central actors.

Globally, studies from other post-conflict societies provide useful parallels. For instance, research in Colombia shows that police officers' attitudes toward demobilized rebels affect reintegration outcomes and community trust (Sánchez & Valencia, 2022). Similarly, in Northern Ireland, reconciliation between security forces and ex-combatants required deep emotional work, reflective dialogue, and institutional reform (McAuley, 2021). These examples highlight that peacebuilding is not only structural but also deeply psychological and relational.

Local studies in the Philippines echo similar themes. Datu (2020) examined community-based reconciliation programs in Mindanao and found that intergroup dialogue reduced suspicion and hostility between former rebels and local authorities. On the other hand, Mendoza (2021) emphasized that institutional rigidity and lingering stigma within law enforcement hinder effective collaboration. These findings suggest that while policy frameworks may promote inclusivity, the emotional and experiential dimensions of peace remain underexplored.

The present study, therefore, fills this gap by focusing directly on the lived experiences of commissioned officers of the PNP in BARMM. Through phenomenological inquiry, it seeks to capture the essence of their day-to-day encounters, perceptions, and reflections in working alongside former rebels. This exploration contributes to both criminological and sociological understanding of how peace and justice intersect within the institutional realities of post-conflict governance.

This study is grounded in three interrelated theoretical perspectives: Restorative Justice Theory, Social Identity Theory, and Contact Hypothesis. Each offers a conceptual lens for understanding how former adversaries reconstruct their relationships within institutional and interpersonal contexts.

Restorative Justice Theory is widely attributed to Howard Zehr, considered the “grandfather of restorative justice.” Early in the 1980s, it served as the central framework of this study. It emphasizes healing, dialogue, and the rebuilding of relationships following harm or conflict (Zehr, 2020). Within this perspective, justice extends beyond punishment and focuses on restoration—repairing the damage caused by conflict and fostering understanding among stakeholders. Applied to this research, restorative justice provides a criminological basis for examining how PNP commissioned officers engage with former rebels in ways that transcend enforcement toward reconciliation and peacebuilding. The theory situates their interactions as opportunities for healing historical divides through mutual recognition, empathy, and cooperative community work.

Social Identity Theory, as developed by Tajfel and Turner (1979) underscores the significance of group membership in shaping perceptions and behaviors (Postmes et al., 2020). Within the PNP–former rebel dynamic, identity boundaries—“us” versus “them”—have historically been rigid. Understanding how these identities shift in post-conflict collaboration is essential. Officers may struggle with cognitive dissonance as they reconcile their past adversarial roles with their present peacebuilding tasks. This theoretical lens helps explain how identity reconstruction contributes to the transformation from enmity to friendship, reinforcing social cohesion within security and community settings.

Finally, Contact Hypothesis (Allport, as revisited by Dixon et al., 2022) suggests that positive interaction between members of opposing groups reduces prejudice and fosters understanding—provided that contact occurs under conditions of equal status, shared goals, and institutional support. This is particularly relevant in the BARMM context, where collaborative programs such as community policing, livelihood assistance, and peacebuilding dialogues provide structured opportunities for cooperative contact between police officers and former rebels.

Together, these theories establish a multidimensional conceptual framework. Restorative justice offers the moral and philosophical grounding; social identity theory explains the psychological processes of role transformation; and contact hypothesis contextualizes the mechanisms of reconciliation through structured engagement. Personally, I find these frameworks highly appropriate because they align with the Philippine government’s current peace and development agenda, which emphasizes empathy, inclusivity, and shared responsibility. Moreover, they embody the criminological transition from retribution to restoration—a shift critical to understanding modern policing in post-conflict environments.

In the research titled “Then Enemy, Now Friend: A Multi-Case Study of Commissioned Officers with the Former Rebels in the Philippine National Police”, “Commissioned Officers” refer to uniformed personnel of the Philippine National Police holding ranks from Police Lieutenant to Police General, while “Former Rebels (Local Terrorist Group)” are individuals who were once active members local terrorist group of insurgent or revolutionary movements but have since surrendered, been granted amnesty, or undergone reintegration through the peace process. The term “Experiences” refers to the lived realities, perceptions, and reflections of commissioned officers in their direct and ongoing interactions with former rebels. Each concept is operationalized within a criminological lens, emphasizing the transformation of social relationships and institutional behavior in pursuit of restorative justice and sustainable peace.

Although peacebuilding in the Philippines has been widely studied, few inquiries have centered on the lived experiences of commissioned officers who interact directly with former rebels in the BARMM. Existing literature has primarily focused on former combatants’ reintegration challenges (Mendoza, 2021; Rahim, 2022) or on policy evaluations of government peace programs (Flores, 2021). There is, however, a noticeable absence of studies exploring how law enforcement officers personally interpret, adapt to, and emotionally process this new relational landscape.

Moreover, most research remains programmatic and quantitative in nature, often measuring success through reintegration rates or policy outputs, rather than examining human experience and meaning. As a result, the subjective realities of those at the intersection of enforcement and reconciliation remain underrepresented in scholarly discussions.

This research addresses that gap by employing a phenomenological approach to uncover the essence of the officers’ experiences. By capturing their perspectives, emotions, and reflections, this study aims to articulate how reconciliation and peacebuilding occur within the unique context of policing—a domain traditionally associated with control rather than collaboration.

Conducting this research in the BARMM region is particularly relevant and urgent. The area continues to navigate complex transitions from armed struggle to autonomous governance, with the PNP playing a vital role in maintaining stability and implementing peace programs. Understanding how commissioned officers experience and interpret their interactions with former rebels could inform culturally sensitive, peace-oriented policing strategies and strengthen the human dimensions of institutional transformation.

This study aims to explore and understand the lived experiences of commissioned officers of the Philippine National Police (PNP) as they interact, collaborate, and coexist with former rebels within the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). Guided by a qualitative phenomenological design, the study seeks to uncover the meanings, emotions, and reflections that shape the officers' perspectives on reconciliation, cooperation, and peacebuilding in a post-conflict environment.

Through in-depth interviews and thematic analysis, the study will illuminate the officers' personal and professional journeys as they navigate the transformation from viewing rebels as adversaries to working with them as allies. This inquiry will also examine the internal and institutional factors influencing their experiences—such as training, leadership, community culture, and historical context. The ultimate goal is to articulate the essence of how these officers perceive their roles in sustaining peace and promoting restorative justice within a once divided society.

Further, the research study is guided by the following research objectives; to examine the challenges and adjustments encountered by commissioned officers in working alongside individuals previously identified as adversaries; to explore the experiences of officers that shaped their perceptions, attitudes, and trust toward former rebels within the PNP; to generate themes, lessons, and insights that may inform policies, training programs, and reintegration strategies involving former rebels in law enforcement institutions. Lastly, to determine the similarities and differences emerge in the lived experiences of PNP commissioned officers as they engage with former rebels in the BARMM region.

This study contributes to criminological and sociological literature by examining the intersection of law enforcement, reconciliation, and restorative justice in a post-conflict context. It expands the understanding of restorative policing—how officers transition from traditional enforcement roles toward roles emphasizing peace, dialogue, and trust-building. The phenomenological approach provides an original contribution by capturing officers' narratives as empirical evidence of institutional transformation. The findings may serve as a foundation for future theory-building in restorative criminology, peace-oriented policing, and post-conflict governance.

Moreover, this study enriches the global academic discourse on peacebuilding by offering a perspective grounded in Southeast Asian experience. Much of the literature on post-conflict policing draws from Western contexts such as Northern Ireland, Bosnia, or Colombia (McAuley, 2021; Sánchez & Valencia, 2022). The inclusion of the BARMM experience offers a culturally nuanced understanding of reconciliation within a Muslim-majority region that continues to evolve under an autonomous political structure.

At the social level, this research underscores the importance of empathy, communication, and moral transformation in the pursuit of peace. By listening to the stories of commissioned officers, policymakers and peace advocates can better design programs that foster trust between former adversaries and ensure that peace initiatives address human realities, not just structural goals.

For law enforcement, the study provides a practical framework for developing peace-oriented training, community-based interventions, and leadership development programs. Understanding officers' challenges and successes in engaging former rebels can guide the PNP in formulating culturally responsive policing models tailored for conflict-affected areas. The insights derived can also contribute to refining recruitment, values formation, and mentoring processes within the organization.

At the policy level, this research aligns with the Philippine National Action Plan on Peace, Women, and Security (2020–2028) and complements national reintegration strategies under the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation, and Unity (OPAPRU). Its findings can inform evidence-based policy formulation that integrates criminological insights into national peacebuilding strategies.

In addition, this study will be valuable to various sectors that play crucial roles in sustaining peace and strengthening institutions in post-conflict settings. For the Law Enforcement Agencies, the results can enhance the understanding of peacebuilding within the PNP and related organizations, leading to improved collaboration mechanisms with former rebels and community stakeholders. Policymakers may also benefit, as the results can inform the creation of inclusive, humane, and context-sensitive reintegration programs that foster long-term stability and build trust between government institutions and reintegrated former combatants. Academic Institutions, particularly universities and training academies can incorporate the study's findings into criminology and peace education curricula, inspiring future professionals to adopt restorative perspectives in public service. Moreover, future researchers may use this study for further empirical and theoretical research on post-conflict policing, reconciliation psychology, and the human dimensions of institutional reform.

Ultimately, this study is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions. The research contributes to SDG 16 by examining peacebuilding, reconciliation, and restorative justice within law enforcement, specifically the role of the Philippine National Police in post-conflict settings. By exploring the lived experiences of commissioned officers working with former rebels, the study supports the promotion of inclusive institutions, trust-building, and sustainable peace, consistent with the objectives of SDG 16.

Every research undertaking has inherent limitations and scope boundaries. Acknowledging these is essential for maintaining transparency, academic integrity, and contextual clarity.

This study's primary limitation is its sample size, which may be restricted to a small number of participants due to the qualitative and phenomenological design. The purpose of this approach, however, is depth rather than breadth—focusing on the richness of individual experiences rather than generalizing across populations.

Second, the sensitivity of the topic may affect participants' openness, as officers might be cautious in discussing personal or institutional experiences involving former rebels. To mitigate this, the researcher will ensure anonymity, confidentiality, and a secure interview environment that encourages honest reflection.

Third, researcher bias may pose a challenge since the researcher is affiliated with the PNP. Reflexivity and bracketing will therefore be employed to separate professional identity from analytical interpretation. Lastly, logistical factors such as travel restrictions, scheduling difficulties, or security considerations within the BARMM area may also limit access to certain locales or participants.

This study will be delimited to commissioned officers of the PNP who have had direct and sustained interactions with former rebels through official assignments or peacebuilding initiatives. It will not include non-commissioned officers or civilian peace workers, as the focus is on the leadership and managerial experiences of commissioned ranks.

Geographically, the research will be confined to selected areas within BARMM, where former rebels are actively participating in reintegration and community programs. The study's timeframe will cover a specific data collection period (six months), after which thematic analysis and interpretation will be conducted.

Conceptually, the study is delimited to experiential and phenomenological interpretation. It will not attempt to quantify attitudes or measure policy effectiveness but instead seeks to understand meanings, emotions, and perceptions. Recognizing these boundaries ensures that the study remains coherent, ethically sound, and aligned with its phenomenological objective of exploring the human experience behind peacebuilding within law enforcement contexts.

CHAPTER TWO METHOD

This section presents the method and procedures employed in this study including the study participants, materials and instrument, and design and procedures.

➤ *Study Participants*

This study involved commissioned officers of the Philippine National Police (PNP) who were assigned within the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). These participants had firsthand experiences in working or engaging with former rebels under peace and reintegration initiatives. They were individuals who had participated in programs such as community-based peacebuilding, joint security coordination, or socio-development projects involving former combatants.

The participants' key attributes included leadership responsibility, professional discipline, and direct exposure to post-conflict community engagement. The target sample size for in-depth interviews was 10 participants, consistent with phenomenological research standards that emphasized data saturation over numerical representation, as noted by John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth (2021). This number was deemed adequate for uncovering patterns of meaning while maintaining manageable depth in qualitative analysis.

A purposive sampling technique was employed. This method allowed the deliberate selection of participants based on their relevance and experience concerning the research phenomenon, as discussed by Lawrence A. Palinkas et al. (2021). Officers who had worked directly with reintegrated former rebels, either through formal assignments or peace-oriented programs, were included.

The inclusion criteria consisted of the following: commissioned officers of the Philippine National Police (PNP) holding ranks from Police Lieutenant to Police Colonel; officers who were currently assigned within the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM); officers aged 25 to 59 years; officers with at least one year of direct experience working with former rebels through peacebuilding or reintegration initiatives; officers who were members of the Revitalized Pulis sa Barangay; and officers who voluntarily agreed to participate and provided informed consent. The exclusion criteria included officers who had no direct interaction with former rebels; those who were assigned to purely administrative units without community engagement; those who expressed unwillingness or discomfort in participating in the interviews; and Police Non-Commissioned Officers as well as Non-Uniformed Personnel. The study allowed qualified participants to withdraw at any point without penalty or negative consequences. Participants were also allowed to refuse to answer any interview question they found uncomfortable or sensitive. Withdrawal or refusal to respond did not affect their duty assignment, performance evaluation, promotion prospects, or professional standing within the Philippine National Police. Any data collected prior to withdrawal were excluded from analysis upon the participant's request.

The study locale included selected BARMM provinces—such as Maguindanao del Sur, Maguindanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur, and Cotabato City—where the PNP actively collaborated with reintegrated former rebels through peace and order programs. This locale was chosen for its socio-political relevance as a region undergoing historical transformation from conflict to autonomy.

➤ *Materials and Instruments*

The primary instruments to be used are semi-structured interview guides, field notes, and a researcher's reflective journal.

The interview guide will contain open-ended questions designed to elicit rich descriptions of participants' lived experiences. Questions will cover topics such as: (1) officers' first encounters with former rebels; (2) perceptions of trust, reconciliation, and collaboration; (3) challenges and ethical dilemmas faced; and (4) reflections on the peace process.

If researcher-made, the interview guide will be validated by six experts in criminology, peace studies, and qualitative research. Validation scores will be computed through content validity index (CVI) and expected to yield a minimum average score of 0.90, signifying excellent content validity.

Field notes will capture non-verbal cues, contextual details, and spontaneous reflections observed during interviews, providing supplementary data for thematic interpretation. The reflective journal will document the researcher's insights, emotional responses, and analytical thoughts throughout the process to ensure reflexivity and transparency.

➤ *Design and Procedure*

This study will utilize a qualitative phenomenological design, following Creswell's (2021) emphasis on understanding the essence of lived experiences from the perspectives of those who encountered the phenomenon. Phenomenology is appropriate for exploring how commissioned officers of the Philippine National Police interpret their interactions with former rebels—individuals once considered adversaries but now engaged as partners in peacebuilding. The study is exploratory in objective, seeking to uncover subjective meanings not yet documented in Philippine policing literature, and cross-sectional in time dimension, capturing

experiences at a single period. To interpret these narratives, the research will employ thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006).

In this study, the researcher, a PNP officer and criminology scholar, will serve as the primary data collector, using semi-structured, in-depth interviews with commissioned police officers who have direct experience working with former rebels. There is no financial or supervisory conflict of interest; however, a potential perceived conflict of interest exists due to institutional affiliation. To mitigate this, the researcher has no supervisory relationship with participants; the command structure will not have access to participation records; participation is self-initiated; and participation or non-participation will have no effect on assignment, evaluation, or promotion. Ethical approval will be obtained from the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee. The researcher will personally deliver a request letter to conduct the study to the Office of the Regional Director of PRO BAR. The role of the approving authority is limited to granting permission for the conduct of the research and does not include collecting or endorsing names of interested participants. Participation will be initiated by officers through direct and private contact with the researcher. The approving authority will not be informed of who participated, declined, or withdrew from the study. The informed consent process and interviews will be conducted individually and privately, without any supervisor or command official present. Informed consent will be given to the participants before the interviews. Interview will be conducted in secure and private locations mutually agreed upon by the participant and the researcher, such as a private office or designated interview room within authorized Philippine National Police facilities. Only the participant and the researcher will be present during the interview to ensure privacy and prevent interruptions or unauthorized access to the discussion. With the participant's consent, interviews will be audio-recorded using a dedicated digital recording device owned and controlled by the researcher. All audio recordings, transcripts, and related files will be stored in password-protected digital storage accessible only to the researcher. No data will be stored on shared devices or cloud-based platforms. These procedures are implemented in accordance with organizational permissions and ethical standards to ensure participant privacy, confidentiality, and data security. Reflexivity will be ensured through a reflexive journal, documenting the researcher's personal reactions and field experiences to minimize bias. Thematic analysis will identify key themes, focusing on shifts in perception, trust-building, and peacebuilding, while bracketing will help preserve the authenticity of participants' accounts. Trustworthiness will be maintained through member checking, triangulation, and peer debriefing, while an audit trail will ensure dependability.

The researcher closely adhered to the ethical guidelines set by the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee. The study was carried out in compliance with established research procedures, guidelines, and standards, with particular attention given to data collection and management, as well as to the protection of study participants. The researcher took into account the sensitive aspects of the study, including the respondents' privacy and confidentiality, voluntary participation, and the informed consent process. The informed consent questionnaire was designed to be easily understood by participants and was free from technical jargon. The professional schools approved the survey instruments and assisted in their administration. No research surveys were distributed without prior permission from the appropriate offices and authorized personnel.

Additionally, all respondents were allowed to participate voluntarily, without coercion or penalty. Furthermore, the study strictly maintained the confidentiality and privacy of the respondents' personal information. After fulfilling all requirements set by the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee, the researcher was issued a certificate bearing UMEREC Protocol No. 2026-034.

CHAPTER THREE

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and analyzes the findings based on the narratives of ten (10) commissioned officers working with former rebels in the Philippine National Police (PNP) within the BARMM region. It examines the experiences that influenced their perceptions, attitudes, and trust toward former rebels in the PNP; the challenges and adjustments the commissioned officers experienced when working with them; and lessons and insights that can be drawn from these experiences to improve policies, training, and reintegration programs.

Table 1 Profile of the Participants

CASES	PSEUDONYM	Designation	OFFICE/UNIT ASSIGNMENT	Years in Service
1	PCO 1	Provincial Director	Maguindanao del Sur PPO, PRO BAR	28
2	PCO 2	Chief of Police	Maguindanao del Sur PPO, PRO BAR	20
3	PCO 3	Chief of Police	Cotabato City Police Office, PRO BAR	20
4	PCO 4	Chief of Police	Lanao del Sur PPO, PRO BAR	21
5	PCO 5	Chief of Police	Maguindanao del Norte PPO, PRO BAR	20
6	PCO 6	Operation PCO	Lanao del Sur PPO, PRO BAR	25
7	PCO 7	Community Affairs Development	Cotabato City Police Office, PRO BAR	30
8	PCO 8	Salaam Police Center	Maguindanao del Sur PPO, PRO BAR	29
9	PCO 9	Investigation PCO	Cotabato City Police Office, PRO BAR	27
10	PCO 10	Revitalized Pulis Sa Barangay	Maguindanao del Norte PPO, PRO BAR	22

- Case 1. PCO 1 serves as the Provincial Director of the Maguindanao del Sur Police Provincial Office under PRO BAR with 28 years of service, overseeing provincial police operations and providing leadership and supervision to former rebel personnel integrated into the PNP under his command.
- Case 2. PCO 2 serves as the Chief of Police of the Maguindanao del Sur Police Provincial Office under PRO BAR with 20 years of service, managing police operations and directly supervising former rebel PNP personnel assigned to his station, giving him firsthand experience with their integration and performance.
- Case 3. PCO 3 serves as the Chief of Police of the Cotabato City Police Office under PRO BAR with 20 years of service, leading urban policing operations while supervising and working closely with former rebel PNP personnel in the performance of law enforcement duties.
- Case 4. PCO 4 serves as the Chief of Police of the Lanao del Sur Police Provincial Office under PRO BAR with 21 years of service, leading policing efforts in a conflict-affected area and directly managing former rebel police personnel integrated into the PNP within his jurisdiction.
- Case 5. PCO 5 serves as the Chief of Police of the Maguindanao del Norte Police Provincial Office under PRO BAR with 20 years of service, supervising police personnel and working directly with former rebel PNP members in implementing peace and order programs.
- Case 6. PCO 6 serves as an Operations Police Commissioned Officer in the Lanao del Sur Police Provincial Office under PRO BAR with 25 years of service, planning and coordinating police operations while supervising and deploying former rebel PNP personnel in operational assignments.
- Case 7. PCO 7 serves in the Community Affairs Development Unit of the Cotabato City Police Office under PRO BAR with 30 years of service, implementing community engagement programs and working closely with former rebel PNP personnel in strengthening police-community relations.
- Case 8. PCO 8 serves at the Salaam Police Center of the Maguindanao del Sur Police Provincial Office under PRO BAR with 29 years of service, promoting culturally responsive policing while supervising and collaborating with former rebel PNP personnel in community peace and security initiatives.
- Case 9. PCO 9 serves as an Investigation Police Commissioned Officer in the Cotabato City Police Office under PRO BAR with 27 years of service, conducting criminal investigations while mentoring and working alongside former rebel PNP personnel involved in investigative and law enforcement functions.
- Case 10. PCO 10 serves under the Revitalized Pulis sa Barangay Program of the Maguindanao del Norte Police Provincial Office under PRO BAR with 22 years of service, implementing community-based policing programs while directly supervising and working with former rebel PNP personnel in barangay-level peace and security activities.

➤ *Experiences Influencing Perceptions, Attitudes, and Trust Toward Former Rebels*

• *Case 1. PCO 1*

A combination of operational exposure and involvement in conflict resolution significantly influenced PCO 1's perceptions, attitudes, and trust toward former rebels. Through his participation in RIDO settlement operations, he observed that former rebels had strong community ties that were essential for facilitating dialogue and resolving clan conflicts. Their ability to navigate local

dynamics and engage with conflicting parties allowed him to recognize their potential as effective partners in peacebuilding. These experiences gradually shifted his perception from skepticism to appreciation of their role in promoting peace and stability.

“During several RIDO settlement operations, I assigned some former rebels to my team because they had strong connections within the communities involved in the conflict.”

Table 2 Experiences Influencing Perceptions, Attitudes, and Trust Toward Former Rebels

Significant Statements	Emergent Themes
After seeing how they contributed to resolving clan conflicts and supporting community mediation, I realized they could become valuable partners in peacebuilding. [Case 1] Working together across several police operations, community engagements, and peacekeeping activities demonstrated their ability to effectively collaborate with both the police organization and local communities. [Case 2] After working with them in religious and community activities, I realized they were committed to serving the community and supporting peace. [Case 8] After working with them in community development activities, I saw that they were serious about supporting government programs and improving the lives of people in their areas. [Case 10]	Peacebuilding and Community Development Engagement
During several RIDO settlement operations, I assigned some former rebels to my team because they had strong connections within the communities involved in the conflict. [Case 1] After working with them, I recognized their capability and commitment to law enforcement, which transformed my perception into professional respect and trust. [Case 2] Through daily interactions, joint activities, and professional collaboration, officers may observe that many former rebels are genuinely committed to rebuilding their lives and contributing to peace and order. [Case 3] During the time, he helped me apprehend a person selling illegal drugs in the town where he served as a citizen arrestor against the said suspect in court. [Case 5] My perceptions, attitudes, and trust toward former rebels were shaped by my direct experience working with them in daily operations and by observing their professionalism and commitment to serving the community. [Case 6] My trust grew when they actively helped gather information and assisted in understanding the context of incidents involving rebels. [Case 8] I saw how they shared useful insights about rebel movements and helped clarify certain details in the case. Their cooperation and professionalism helped improve our working relationship. [Case 9]	Professional Competence and Commitment
Former rebels are genuinely committed to rebuilding their lives and contributing to peace and order. Seeing them follow rules, perform their duties responsibly, and cooperate with other personnel gradually builds trust and respect. [Case 3] The way I saw their willingness to change was as a good citizen. [Case 5] My perceptions changed when I saw their readiness to renew themselves as better and law-abiding citizens. [Case 7]	Recognition of Personal Reform
Most of them are still loyal to their previous commanders. [Case 4]	Loyalty to Former Affiliations

As he continued to observe their contributions in mediation and community engagement, his trust in them strengthened. Their involvement demonstrated not only competence but also a willingness to support peace initiatives.

“After seeing how they contributed to resolving clan conflicts and supporting community mediation, I realized they could become valuable partners in peacebuilding.”

• *Case 2 – PCO 2*

Operational collaboration and community engagement influenced his perceptions, attitudes, and trust toward former rebels. Through repeated involvement in police operations, peacekeeping activities, and community-based initiatives, he observed their ability to work effectively with both law enforcement personnel and local communities. This allowed him to move beyond initial doubts and recognize his capability to function within the organization's structure.

“Working together across several police operations, community engagements, and peacekeeping activities demonstrated their ability to effectively collaborate with both the police organization and local communities.”

As he continued working with them, their consistent performance and commitment to their duties reinforced his confidence in their professionalism, which transformed his perception into one of respect and trust.

“After working with them, I recognized their capability and commitment to law enforcement, which transformed my perception into professional respect and trust.”

- *Case 3 – PCO 3*

Continuous professional interaction and daily collaboration influenced PCO 3's perceptions, attitudes, and trust toward former rebels. Through joint activities and routine operations, he observed their efforts to rebuild their lives and contribute positively to peace and order.

“Through daily interactions, joint activities, and professional collaboration, I observed that many former rebels are genuinely committed to rebuilding their lives and contributing to peace and order.”

Over time, their consistent adherence to rules, responsible performance of duties, and cooperation with other personnel reinforced his trust and respect, which highlights how exposure and observation of behavior can influence attitudes and lead to recognition of genuine reform.

“Former rebels are genuinely committed to rebuilding their lives and contributing to peace and order. Seeing them follow rules, perform their duties responsibly, and cooperate with other personnel gradually builds trust and respect.”

- *Case 4 – PCO 4*

Experiences involving trust issues and behavioral challenges significantly influenced PCO 4's perceptions, attitudes, and trust toward former rebels. In fact, among all cases, only PCO 4 does not have a positive attitude toward former rebels based on his experience. As a unit head, he encountered persistent difficulties in aligning them with the organization's policies, rules, and directives. These challenges were primarily shaped by his observations that some former rebels retained loyalty to their previous affiliations, which affected their discipline, decision-making, and compliance with authority. Such experiences created a sense of doubt and caution, leading him to maintain distance and closely monitor their behavior within the unit.

“Being as a Head of the Unit... there was a trust issue... Most of them are still loyal to their previous commanders.”

His perception was further influenced by instances of disobedience, misunderstanding of organizational policies, and concerns about their full commitment to the PNP.

“In the way that they will understand the policy... more often, they will still follow what they learned from their past group rather than thinking that they are now in the PNP Organization.”

- *Case 5 – PCO 5*

Direct operational experience significantly influenced PCO 5's perceptions, attitudes, and trust toward former rebels. A notable incident occurred when a former rebel assisted in apprehending a suspect involved in illegal drug activities and participated in court proceedings as a citizen arrestor. This firsthand experience demonstrated their willingness to uphold the law and contribute to justice.

“During the time, he helped me apprehend a person selling illegal drugs... he served as a citizen arrestor against the said suspect in court.”

Witnessing this act of cooperation shaped his perception by reinforcing the belief that former rebels are capable of genuine change. Their actions served as evidence of their commitment to lawful conduct, strengthening his trust and influencing his attitude toward their role in society.

“The way I saw their willingness to change was as a good citizen.”

- *Case 6 – PCO 6*

Daily operational interaction and firsthand observation influenced PCO 6's perceptions, attitudes, and trust toward former rebels. Through continuous collaboration in police duties, he observed their professionalism, discipline, and commitment to serving the community. Over time, their consistent conduct reinforced his confidence in their ability to perform their roles effectively.

“My perceptions, attitudes, and trust toward former rebels were shaped by my direct experience working with them in daily operations and by observing their professionalism and commitment to serving the community.”

- *Case 7 – PCO 7*

Experiences in community engagement and observation of behavioral change influenced PCO 7's perceptions, attitudes, and trust toward former rebels. Through involvement in community affairs and development initiatives, he witnessed their efforts to reform and align with societal expectations.

"My perceptions changed when I saw their readiness to renew themselves as better and law-abiding citizens."

Their visible transformation influenced his attitude, enabling him to recognize their potential for reintegration. This experience highlights how observing behavioral change can reshape perceptions and foster trust.

- *Case 8 – PCO 8*

Participation in religious and community activities significantly influenced PCO 8's perceptions, attitudes, and trust toward former rebels. Through direct involvement in these engagements, he was able to observe their active participation and commitment to promoting peace and serving the community. These experiences provided him with a clearer understanding of their intentions and allowed him to reassess his initial perceptions.

"After working with them in religious and community activities, I realized they were committed to serving the community and supporting peace."

Their involvement, particularly in organizing and supporting Islamic religious activities, further reinforced his trust. Observing their sincerity, cooperation, and dedication in these settings enabled him to develop confidence in their role within both the organization and the community.

"My trust grew when they helped organize and support Islamic religious activities."

- *Case 9 – PCO 9*

Investigative collaboration played a significant role in shaping PCO 9's perceptions, attitudes, and trust toward former rebels. Through direct involvement in investigative work, he observed their capacity to provide valuable information and clarity on critical case details. These experiences allowed him to evaluate their role based on actual performance, leading to a more informed and positive perception.

"I saw how they shared useful insights about rebel movements and helped clarify certain details in the case."

Their cooperation and professionalism strengthened his trust and improved their working relationship, which highlights how collaboration on critical tasks can shape perceptions and reinforce confidence.

"Their cooperation and professionalism helped improve our working relationship."

- *Case 10 – PCO 10*

Involvement in community development activities influenced PCO 10's perceptions, attitudes, and trust toward former rebels. Through participation in government programs and local initiatives, he observed their commitment to improving the lives of people in their communities. Their engagement in these activities shaped his perception by highlighting their dedication to public service.

"After working with them in community development activities, I saw that they were serious about supporting government programs and improving the lives of people in their areas."

Table 2 presents the significant statements and emergent themes that describe the experiences that influenced participants' perceptions, attitudes, and trust toward former rebels in the Philippine National Police. From the analysis, three major themes emerged: (1) Peacebuilding and Community Development Engagement, (2) Professional Competence and Commitment, (3) Recognition of Personal Reform, and (4) Loyalty to former affiliations. These themes collectively illustrate that participants' perceptions were shaped by both positive and challenging experiences in working with former rebels.

➤ *Peacebuilding and Community Development Engagement*

This highlights how direct involvement of former rebels in mediation, community programs, and peacekeeping activities positively influenced officers' perceptions. Participants observed that former rebels played active roles in resolving conflicts, supporting community initiatives, and participating in religious and development-oriented activities. These experiences allowed officers to view them as valuable partners in promoting peace and maintaining order. This indicates that exposure to community-based contributions strengthens trust and facilitates acceptance within the PNP organization.

This finding aligns with the principles of Restorative Justice Theory (Zehr, 2020), which emphasizes dialogue, healing, and collaborative problem-solving as pathways to rebuilding relationships after conflict. The active participation of former rebels in

peacebuilding initiatives reflects a shift from punitive to restorative approaches in policing. Furthermore, this result supports the Contact Hypothesis (Dixon et al., 2022), which posits that meaningful and cooperative interaction between opposing groups reduces prejudice and fosters mutual understanding.

This finding is also consistent with the study of Datu (2020), which demonstrated that community-based reconciliation initiatives in Mindanao reduced hostility and strengthened cooperation between former adversaries. Similarly, Alih et al. (2023) emphasized that police–community engagement in post-conflict settings enhances trust and collaboration. Thus, exposure to community-based contributions not only reshaped officers' perceptions but also facilitated the normalization of relationships within the PNP organization.

➤ *Professional Competence and Commitment*

This reflects how operational performance and collaboration influenced participants' attitudes. Participants emphasized that former rebels demonstrated capability, discipline, and cooperation in various law enforcement tasks, including RIDO settlement, investigations, and crime prevention. Observing their professionalism and active participation in police work helped shift perceptions from doubt to respect. This indicates that trust is largely built through performance-based evaluation, where demonstration of competence reinforces credibility within the organization.

This finding supports the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), which explains that group boundaries can be redefined through shared goals and cooperative roles. As former rebels demonstrated competence within the institutional framework, the distinction between “us” (police) and “them” (rebels) became less rigid, fostering a more inclusive professional identity.

This result is consistent with Sánchez and Valencia (2022), who found that police officers' perceptions of demobilized rebels improved when the latter demonstrated competence and reliability in operational tasks. It also supports Mendoza (2021), who emphasized that institutional acceptance is strengthened when reintegrated individuals meet professional standards. These findings suggest that trust is largely performance-based, where consistent demonstration of competence reinforces credibility and legitimacy within the organization.

• *Recognition of Personal Reform*

This highlights the role of behavioral change in shaping perceptions. Participants shared that observing former rebels follow rules, perform duties responsibly, and express willingness to change contributed to the development of trust and respect. These experiences encouraged officers to assess them based on their present actions rather than their past affiliations. The importance of visible transformation is highlighted in this result, which facilitates acceptance and reinforces the belief that reintegration is possible.

This finding aligns with Restorative Justice Theory, which underscores the importance of accountability, transformation, and reintegration in achieving meaningful reconciliation (Zehr, 2020). The recognition of personal reform reflects the process of re-humanization, where former adversaries are no longer defined by past conflict but by their current contributions to society.

This result is consistent with Garcia and Ong (2020) and Romero (2023), who emphasized that sustainable peacebuilding requires empathy, mutual recognition, and the acknowledgment of change. It also supports Cruz et al. (2023), who highlighted the importance of personal narratives in shaping reconciliation processes. The findings suggest that visible transformation plays a critical role in facilitating acceptance and reinforcing the belief that reintegration is both possible and sustainable.

• *Manifestation of Loyalty to Former Affiliations*

In contrast, this theme captures the challenges associated with an incomplete transition and the continued influence of former group affiliations on behavior and decision-making. The participant observed instances in which some former rebels appeared to retain elements of loyalty to their former groups, which affected their ability to fully adhere to organizational policies, rules, and directives. These lingering influences were reflected in their actions and responses within the unit, suggesting difficulty in fully internalizing their new role in the organization. As a result, such manifestations of loyalty created doubt and caution among participants, particularly regarding trust, discipline, and reliability in carrying out assigned duties.

This finding can be explained through Social Identity Theory, which posits that deeply ingrained group identities may persist even after formal role transitions. The difficulty in fully internalizing a new institutional identity reflects the complexity of identity reconstruction in post-conflict settings.

This result is consistent with Mendoza (2021), who identified institutional barriers and lingering stigma as challenges to effective reintegration within law enforcement agencies. It also aligns with Rahim (2022), who noted that reintegration is a gradual, often uneven process influenced by psychological, social, and organizational factors. Moreover, this finding reflects the limitations of the Contact Hypothesis, suggesting that while interaction can reduce prejudice, it does not automatically eliminate deeply rooted affiliations without sustained structural and psychological support.

➤ *Challenges when Working with Former Rebels*• *Case 1 – PCO 1*

A combination of psychological adjustment and the gradual process of building trust significantly influenced PCO 1's experience in working with former rebels. At the outset, he encountered difficulty shifting his mindset from viewing them as former government adversaries to recognizing them as partners in maintaining peace and order. To address this, he had to balance caution with fairness while providing opportunities for former rebels to demonstrate their commitment. Through this approach, he gradually strengthened trust within the unit.

“One of the main challenges was overcoming the initial perception that they were once adversaries of the government. As leaders, we had to adjust by focusing on their current role as police officers and evaluating them based on their performance. Building trust required patience and consistent interaction...I had to balance caution with fairness in giving them responsibilities. The adjustment involved creating an environment where they could prove their commitment while still ensuring proper supervision.”

Building trust proved to be a gradual process. He added that trust could not be established immediately but required patience and continuous engagement.

“Building trust required patience and consistent interaction.”

Table 3 Challenges when Working with Former Rebels

Significant Statements	Emergent Themes
One of the main challenges was overcoming the initial perception that they were once adversaries of the government. [Case 1] The main challenge was the psychological adjustment from seeing them as former adversaries to recognizing them as professional colleagues. [Case 2] Considering the fact that they were former enemies, it is very difficult for an Officer to trust when they are performing their functions and duties. [Case 4] One challenge was adjusting my mindset because we used to see them as enemies. [Case 6] One challenge was overcoming the initial hesitation in working closely with individuals who were once involved in armed struggle. [Case 8] One challenge was overcoming the initial doubt in working with individuals who were once part of rebel groups. [Case 9]	Mindset Adjustment
Building trust required patience and consistent interaction. [Case 1] Initial distrust and ensuring security while working with former rebels. [Case 3] It is very hard to believe their total allegiance to the Flag, Patriotism, and to the Organization [Case 4] The most difficult challenge was building trust within the unit. [Case 2] My initial reaction was doubt and caution. [Case 6] The main challenge was building trust at the beginning because of their past involvement with rebel groups. [Case 8] The main challenge was ensuring trust during sensitive investigations. [Case 9] The main difficulty was ensuring that everyone in the group would trust and accept each other as colleagues. [Case 10]	Building Mutual Trust
Some former rebels were initially hesitant or reserved when interacting with police officers. [Case 3] At first, communication with them was limited because they still did not fully trust us. [Case 5] The main difficulties working with them were the way I communicate to them [Case 7]	Communication and Integration Barriers
During nighttime, they leave the premises of the camp just to meet their friends from their previous group. This instantly suggested that they were still rebels even though they were working in the government. [Case 4]	Loyalty Issues

• *Case 2 – PCO 2*

PCO 2's experience was influenced by both mindset adjustment and the challenge of building mutual trust. At first, he found it difficult to transition from viewing former rebels as enemies to accepting them as professional colleagues within the organization. This psychological shift required conscious effort, as prior perceptions created barriers to immediate acceptance and cooperation.

“The main challenge was the psychological adjustment from seeing them as former adversaries to recognizing them as professional colleagues.”

In addition, establishing trust and unity within the unit was identified as one of the most difficult challenges. Developing a cohesive working environment required deliberate leadership strategies to ensure fairness, discipline, and collaboration among all members. To address this, he promoted equal treatment, strengthened supervision, and reinforced organizational values, which gradually contributed to improved trust and teamwork.

“The challenge was building trust and unity within the unit. I addressed this by promoting equal treatment, strengthening supervision, and reinforcing organizational values.”

- *Case 3 – PCO 3*

Communication barriers and the need to build trust significantly influenced PCO 3's experience working with former rebels. During the early stages of interaction, he observed that some individuals were hesitant and reserved, hindering open communication and slowing rapport development.

“Some former rebels were initially hesitant or reserved when interacting with police officers. To adjust, I encouraged open communication, maintained respectful dialogue, and created an environment where they could gradually feel comfortable cooperating with authorities.”

At the same time, he identified that one of the most difficult aspects of his role was managing initial distrust while ensuring operational security. This required maintaining a balance between professional caution and fair treatment, without allowing suspicion to negatively affect interactions or teamwork.

The most difficult challenge for me as a commissioned officer in the Philippine National Police was overcoming initial distrust and ensuring security while working with former rebels. It was difficult because this required maintaining professional caution without letting suspicion affect interactions or teamwork.

- *Case 4 – PCO 4*

Experiences of trust issues and loyalty concerns significantly influenced PCO 4's challenges when working with former rebels. As a unit head, he found it difficult to fully trust them in performing their duties, primarily because of their background as former adversaries and behaviors that raised concerns about their allegiance.

“Considering the fact that they were former enemies, it is very difficult for an Officer to trust when they are performing their functions and duties.”

His concerns were further reinforced by instances in which some former rebels kept ties to their former groups, raising doubts about their loyalty to the organization. This situation required additional vigilance and leadership intervention to prevent potential risks and ensure proper conduct.

“During nighttime, they leave the premises of the camp just to meet their friends from their previous group... This instantly suggested that they were still rebels even though they were working in the government.”

These experiences highlight that trust and loyalty are critical challenges, particularly when past affiliations continue to influence behavior.

- *Case 5 – PCO 5*

Communication and trust-building challenges significantly influenced PCO 5's experience when working with former rebels. At the initial stage, communication was limited due to mutual hesitation, as both parties required time to establish openness and understanding. This hesitation was further compounded by language differences, which created additional barriers to conveying information effectively and building rapport.

“At first, communication with them was limited because they still did not fully trust us and were not open to answering our questions. Second, there was also a language barrier, since some of them did not know how to speak Tagalog.”

Over time, consistent interaction and shared experiences helped reduce these barriers, enabling improved communication and the gradual development of trust.

- *Case 6 – PCO 6*

Mindset adjustment and initial doubt significantly influenced PCO 6's challenges when working with former rebels. At the beginning, he experienced caution and uncertainty, shaped by their past involvement in armed groups. His initial reaction of doubt reflected the difficulty of transitioning from a conflict-oriented perception to a collaborative professional relationship within the organization. To address this challenge, he emphasized professionalism and fairness in his interactions with them.

“One challenge was adjusting my mindset because we used to see them as enemies. I had to focus on professionalism and treat them fairly as members of the same organization. Over time, this helped improve our working relationship... “My initial reaction was doubt and caution.”

- *Case 7 – PCO 7*

Communication difficulties influenced PCO 7's experience when working with former rebels. He encountered challenges communicating with them, particularly during interactions, where differences in understanding and perspective created barriers.

“The main difficulties working with them were the way I communicate to them, but I addressed this complication with the help of the local police officers in the area.”

To address these challenges, he relied on local police officers, who were more familiar with the context and communication dynamics, helping bridge the gap between him and the former rebels.

- *Case 8 – PCO 8*

Mindset adjustment and trust-building significantly influenced PCO 8's challenges when working with former rebels. At the outset, he hesitated to work closely with individuals who had previously been involved in armed struggle. This initial uncertainty was shaped by their past affiliations.

“One challenge was overcoming the initial hesitation in working closely with individuals who were once involved in armed struggle.”

In addition, building trust proved gradual and required consistent interaction and cooperation. Initial doubts could not be immediately resolved and had to be addressed through shared experiences and observation of their behavior over time. To overcome these challenges, he adopted strategies that promoted open communication and active participation, particularly by involving them in community and religious activities.

“The main challenge was building trust at the beginning because of their past involvement with rebel groups. I addressed this by encouraging open communication and giving them opportunities to participate in community and religious activities. This helped strengthen our working relationship.”

- *Case 9 – PCO 9*

Mindset adjustment and trust concerns significantly influenced PCO 9's experience, particularly in investigative work. At the outset, he found it difficult to overcome doubt when working with individuals who had previously been part of rebel groups. This required a conscious shift in perspective, focusing on professionalism and evaluating them based on their current roles within the organization rather than their past affiliations.

“One challenge was overcoming the initial doubt in working with individuals who were once part of rebel groups. The adjustment was focusing on professionalism and evaluating them based on their current role in the organization.”

Ensuring trust during investigations proved to be particularly challenging due to the sensitive nature of the work, which demands reliability, confidentiality, and accuracy. To address this, he adopted a balanced approach by closely supervising tasks while still providing opportunities for former rebels to contribute meaningfully to investigative processes.

“The main challenge was ensuring trust during sensitive investigations. I addressed this by closely supervising tasks while giving them opportunities to contribute to the investigation.”

- *Case 10 – PCO 10*

The challenge of building mutual trust influenced PCO 10's experience when working with former rebels. Within the unit, ensuring that all members trusted and accepted each other as colleagues was identified as a primary difficulty. This challenge affected teamwork and required deliberate effort to foster unity and cooperation. To address this challenge, PCO 10 emphasized the importance of leadership, fairness, and open communication.

“The main difficulty was ensuring that everyone in the group would trust and accept each other as colleagues. This required patience and leadership to create a positive working environment...I focused on building open communication within the team so that everyone could express their ideas and concerns. Professionally, I treated them the same as other members of the team while ensuring they understood the standards and discipline of the PNP.”

Table 3 presents the significant statements and essential themes describing the challenges commissioned officers face when working with former rebels in the Philippine National Police. The analysis revealed four major themes: (1) Mindset Adjustment, (2)

Building Mutual Trust, (3) Communication and Integration Barriers, and (4) Loyalty Issues. These themes reflect the psychological, relational, and organizational difficulties participants encountered in integrating former rebels into the police system.

➤ *Mindset Adjustment*

This highlights the psychological challenge of transitioning from viewing former rebels as adversaries to recognizing them as colleagues within the organization. Participants described the difficulty of overcoming internalized perceptions shaped by prior conflict experiences, which initially resulted in hesitation and caution in professional interactions.

This finding may be understood in relation to Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), which suggests that deeply rooted group distinctions can persist even after formal role changes. Additionally, this result is consistent with Mendoza (2021), who emphasized that institutional rigidity and lingering stigma within law enforcement can hinder effective collaboration with former rebels. It also aligns with McAuley (2021), who noted that in post-conflict environments, security actors often struggle to reconcile past adversarial roles with new collaborative expectations.

➤ *Building Mutual Trust*

This emphasizes the complexity and gradual nature of establishing trust between officers and former rebels. Participants indicated that trust was not immediate and required consistent interaction, observation, and cooperation over time. Initial doubts and uncertainties were common, particularly given the past involvement in armed groups. Trust appeared to develop through repeated exposure to reliable behavior and professional engagement.

This finding is consistent with the Contact Hypothesis (Dixon et al., 2022), which suggests that trust and reduced prejudice may emerge from sustained, meaningful interaction, particularly when groups work toward shared goals. However, the findings also indicate that such outcomes are not automatic and require time and appropriate conditions. This result aligns with Sánchez and Valencia (2022), who found that trust between police officers and former rebels in post-conflict settings developed gradually and was influenced by ongoing collaboration and demonstrated reliability. Additionally, Alih et al. (2023) emphasized that trust-building in post-conflict policing contexts is a continuous process shaped by interaction and experience.

➤ *Communication and Integration Barriers*

This reflects the challenges encountered in establishing effective communication and cooperation within the unit. Participants reported that former rebels were initially hesitant or reserved in their interactions, which limited open communication and slowed their integration into the organizational environment. Differences in background, prior experiences, and perspectives appeared to contribute to these barriers, affecting early collaboration within units.

This finding may also be interpreted in relation to the Contact Hypothesis, which indicates that while interaction can reduce social distance, barriers such as unequal familiarity, uncertainty, or lack of openness may limit the effectiveness of early engagement (Dixon et al., 2022). Datu (2020) noted that initial communication gaps and mistrust are common in post-conflict interactions but may decrease over time through sustained dialogue. It also aligns with Cruz et al. (2023), who emphasized that communication plays a central role in shaping reconciliation processes and mutual understanding.

➤ *Loyalty Issues*

This highlights the continued influence of former affiliations on behavior and decision-making. Participants reported instances in which some former rebels appeared to maintain ties to their previous groups, raising concerns about their full alignment with organizational policies and expectations.

This finding may be understood through Social Identity Theory, which suggests that prior group affiliations can remain influential even after individuals transition into new roles. The persistence of these identities may affect how individuals adapt to institutional norms and expectations. This result supports Mendoza (2021), who identified lingering affiliations and institutional mistrust as challenges in reintegration within law enforcement contexts. It also aligns with Rahim (2022), who emphasized that reintegration is a complex and gradual process, often influenced by social, psychological, and structural factors. These findings suggest that loyalty-related concerns may persist in certain cases and may require ongoing monitoring and institutional mechanisms to support full integration.

➤ *Lessons and Insights for Policy, Training, and Reintegration*

• *Case 1 – PCO 1*

PCO 1's experience highlights the importance of strengthening reintegration programs through both community-based engagement and continuous support systems. He emphasized that reintegration should go beyond formal training and include practical participation in peacebuilding activities, enabling former rebels to actively contribute. These experiences demonstrated that participation in real community initiatives enhances their competence and strengthens trust between them and law enforcement personnel.

“One important lesson is that reintegration programs should focus not only on training but also on practical involvement in community peace initiatives.”

In addition, he suggested the need for support mechanisms such as mentoring and monitoring to guide former rebels during their adjustment period. Continuous supervision ensures that they remain aligned with organizational values while gradually improving their performance and behavior.

“There should be stronger support systems, such as continuous mentoring and monitoring for former rebels during their adjustment period.”

Table 4 Lessons and Insights for Policy, Training, and Reintegration

Significant Statements	Emergent Themes
The PNP provided them with the opportunity to become legitimate law enforcers and contribute to maintaining peace and order. [Case 2] Former rebels are more likely to successfully reintegrate when there are clear and well-supported programs [Case 3] Give them the chance to become members of the PNP, CAFGU, or PNP-AFP Auxiliary. [Case 5] I think the opportunity to give them a chance to renew and be part of the PNP organization. [Case 7] The PNP provided them with training and the chance to contribute to police operations. [Case 9]	Institutional Reintegration
One important lesson is that reintegration programs should focus not only on training but also on practical involvement in community peace initiatives. [Case 1] A whole nation approach must be done, different agencies of the government must take part for the enhancement of policies, training programs, and reintegration efforts.” [Case 7] When they are given cash assistance or goods upon surrender, and when they are enrolled in local government programs that the PNP facilitates with the LGU.” [Case 5] I would suggest strengthening partnerships with religious leaders and community organizations in the reintegration process.” [Case 8] One important lesson is that reintegration programs should include community-based activities where former rebels can actively contribute. [Case 9]	Multi-Sectoral Partnerships
Reintegration programs should include specialized training in community relations, conflict mediation, and peacebuilding [Case 1] Creating Special Training for former rebels focusing on reintegration, indoctrination, and trust building within the Organization. [Case 4] The PNP did well in providing training and opportunities for them to serve the community. [Case 6] The government should create additional special training separately for a former rebel. [Case 7] There should be more training related to investigative procedures and professional ethics. [Case 8] The PNP provided them with training and the chance to contribute to police operations. [Case 9] There should be more training focused on community engagement, leadership, and cooperation with other government agencies. [Case 10]	Capacity Building
There should be stronger support systems, such as continuous mentoring and monitoring for former rebels during their adjustment period. [Case 1] Successful reintegration requires strong leadership, continuous mentoring, and consistent enforcement of organizational standards. [Case 2] Continuous monitoring and observation of former rebels, and Continuous education and career development for the former rebels [Case 4] There should be stronger mentoring and guidance for former rebels during their adjustment period.” [Case 5] I would suggest continuous monitoring and support for former rebels during their adjustment period. Regular training and team-building activities can also help strengthen relationships within units. These changes can improve trust and cooperation. [Case 6] There should be stronger mentoring and monitoring systems to guide former rebels during their transition into the police organization.” [Case 9]	Mentoring and Monitoring
Society can learn that reconciliation and reintegration are important parts of achieving long-term peace. [Case 1] Society can learn that former adversaries can become partners in maintaining peace when given the opportunity and proper guidance. [Case 2] People can learn that reconciliation and second chances are possible. Even individuals with difficult pasts can change and contribute to society. [Case 6]	Social Reconciliation

Society can learn that reconciliation and cooperation are possible when people are given a chance to change.” [Case 8]	
People can change and deserve second chances [Case 3] It is important to judge people based on their current actions rather than their past. [Case 6] No matter how bad people are, there is always a way for renewal to a better one. [Case 7] People who sincerely want to change should be given the opportunity to prove themselves. [Case 8] I learned that individuals can change when they are given the opportunity to serve in a lawful role. [Case 9] We should also recognize the potential of individuals who sincerely want to change. [Case 10]	Personal Transformation
Dealing with a former rebel working in the PNP Organization is a difficult part for an Officer in the Unit. It adds an additional problem for you to solve to avoid mistakes and issues within the Unit. [Case 4]	Additional Leadership Challenges

- *Case 2 – PCO 2*

PCO 2’s insights emphasize the importance of institutional reintegration and leadership support in transforming former rebels into productive members of the organization. He recognized that providing opportunities for them to serve within the PNP allows them to transition from former adversaries to legitimate law enforcers, contributing to peace and order.

“The PNP provided them with the opportunity to become legitimate law enforcers and contribute to maintaining peace and order.”

He also highlighted the role of strong leadership, mentoring, and consistent enforcement of organizational standards in ensuring successful reintegration. These elements help build trust, reinforce discipline, and support their professional development within the organization.

“Successful reintegration requires strong leadership, continuous mentoring, and consistent enforcement of organizational standards.”

- *Case 3 – PCO 3*

PCO 3’s experience underscores the importance of recognizing personal transformation as a central component of reintegration. He emphasized that individuals with difficult pasts are capable of change when given opportunities and proper support. This insight reflects the value of second chances in enabling former rebels to rebuild their lives and contribute positively to society.

“People can change and deserve second chances...trust is earned gradually...community support matters.”

His perspective also highlights the importance of Institutional Reintegration, as successful transformation is more likely when individuals are given structured opportunities within formal systems such as the PNP.

“...former rebels are more likely to successfully reintegrate when there are clear and well-supported programs”

- *Case 4 – PCO 4*

PCO 4’s experience underscores the need for structured systems, specialized training, and strong leadership to manage the reintegration of former rebels. He emphasized that existing training programs are insufficient to fully prepare them for integration into the organization, particularly given their unique background and challenges. As a result, he recommended developing specialized training focused on reintegration, indoctrination, and trust-building.

“Creating Special Training for former rebels focusing on reintegration, indoctrination, and trust building within the Organization.”

He also stressed the importance of continuous monitoring, supervision, and career development to ensure proper alignment with organizational values. His experience underscores the additional challenges leaders face in managing former rebels, underscoring the need for systematic approaches and sustained support.

“Continuous monitoring and observation of former rebels, and continuous education and career development for the former rebels.”

- *Case 5 – PCO 5*

PCO 5’s insights emphasize the importance of providing opportunities and support systems for former rebels to successfully reintegrate into society. He highlighted that giving them the chance to join institutions such as the PNP or related organizations enables them to transform into productive members of the community.

“Give them the chance to become members of the PNP, CAFGU, or PNP-AFP Auxiliary.”

He also recognized the role of mentoring and guidance in supporting their transition, ensuring they could adapt to their responsibilities and maintain proper conduct. These experiences highlight that reintegration requires both opportunity and structured support.

“There should be stronger mentoring and guidance for former rebels during their adjustment period.”

- *Case 6 – PCO 6*

PCO 6’s experience highlights the importance of training, monitoring, and recognizing personal transformation in reintegration efforts. He noted that the PNP’s provision of training and opportunities enables former rebels to contribute effectively to police operations and community service.

“The PNP did well in providing training and opportunities for them to serve the community.”

He also emphasized the need for continuous monitoring and support to strengthen trust and cooperation within the organization. These measures help ensure that former rebels remain aligned with organizational standards and perform their duties effectively.

“I would suggest continuous monitoring and support for former rebels during their adjustment period.”

His experience further reflects the importance of recognizing personal transformation, emphasizing that individuals should be evaluated based on their current actions rather than their past.

“People can learn that reconciliation and second chances are possible.”

- *Case 7 – PCO 7*

PCO 7’s insights emphasize the importance of multi-sectoral collaboration and specialized training in reintegration programs. He highlighted that reintegration efforts should involve not only the PNP but also other government agencies to provide comprehensive support.

“A whole nation approach must be done, different agencies of the government must take part...”

He also stressed the need for additional specialized training programs to help former rebels adapt to organizational culture and develop necessary skills.

“The government should create additional special training separately for a former rebel.”

In addition, he emphasized the importance of personal transformation, recognizing that individuals can change and become better members of society when given opportunities.

“No matter how bad people are, there is always a way for renewal to a better one.”

- *Case 8 – PCO 8*

PCO 8’s experience highlights the importance of community partnerships, training, and social reconciliation in reintegration efforts. He emphasized the need to collaborate with religious leaders and community organizations to support former rebels in their transition.

“I would suggest strengthening partnerships with religious leaders and community organizations in the reintegration process.”

He also recognized the importance of enhancing training programs, particularly in investigative procedures and professional ethics, to improve their competence and performance.

“There should be more training related to investigative procedures and professional ethics.”

Furthermore, he highlighted the importance of reconciliation and societal acceptance, emphasizing that cooperation is essential for long-term peace.

“Society can learn that reconciliation and cooperation are possible when people are given a chance to change.”

- *Case 9 – PCO 9*

PCO 9's insights emphasize the importance of institutional reintegration, community-based programs, and continuous mentoring. He highlighted that providing opportunities within the PNP allows former rebels to contribute meaningfully to law enforcement and develop a sense of purpose.

"The PNP provided them with training and the chance to contribute to police operations."

He also emphasized the importance of involving them in community-based activities to strengthen their integration and build trust.

"One important lesson is that reintegration programs should include community-based activities..."

Additionally, he highlighted the need for mentoring and monitoring systems to guide their transition and ensure proper adjustment.

"There should be stronger mentoring and monitoring systems..."

- *Case 10 – PCO 10*

PCO 10's experience highlights the importance of training, capacity building, and recognition of personal transformation in reintegration efforts. He emphasized the need for programs that focus on leadership, community engagement, and inter-agency cooperation to enhance their effectiveness.

"There should be more training focused on community engagement, leadership, and cooperation with other government agencies."

He also underscored the importance of recognizing the potential of individuals who sincerely want to change, reinforcing the value of second chances in reintegration.

"We should also recognize the potential of individuals who sincerely want to change."

Table 4 presents the significant statements and emergent themes that reflect the lessons and insights drawn from participants' experiences working with former rebels in the Philippine National Police. The analysis generated seven major themes: (1) Institutional Reintegration, (2) Multi-Sectoral Partnerships, (3) Capacity Building, (4) Mentoring and Monitoring, (5) Social Reconciliation, (6) Personal Transformation, and (7) Additional Leadership Challenges. These themes highlight the key areas that need strengthening to improve policies, training programs, and reintegration efforts.

➤ *Institutional Reintegration*

This emphasizes the importance of providing former rebels with opportunities to become part of formal institutions such as the PNP and related security organizations. Participants recognized that inclusion in law enforcement roles enables former rebels to transition into legitimate contributors to peace and order. This finding suggests that institutional inclusion serves as a critical pathway for transforming former rebels into productive members of society.

This finding reflects the observations of Salcedo and Tiongson (2022), who discussed the role of the PNP in facilitating reintegration and peacebuilding efforts involving former rebels. It also echoes Flores (2021), who described reintegration programs as structured avenues that enable former combatants to re-enter society through formal institutions.

➤ *Multi-Sectoral Partnerships*

This highlights the need for collaboration among various stakeholders, including government agencies, local government units, religious leaders, and community organizations. Based on participants' experiences, reintegration cannot be achieved solely by the police organization. It requires a coordinated, whole-of-nation approach.

This observation resonates with Basman (2021), who emphasized that peacebuilding in the Bangsamoro context involves a hybrid approach combining state mechanisms and community-based systems. A similar point was noted by Khan and Navarro (2023), who discussed how institutional transformation in post-conflict settings often depends on cooperation among multiple actors. These insights suggest that a whole-of-nation approach may strengthen reintegration outcomes.

➤ *Capacity Building*

Equipping former rebels with the necessary skills and competencies is essential for facilitating successful integration into the organization. The participants highlighted the need for training in community relations, investigative procedures, professional ethics, and leadership development.

This finding corresponds with Flores (2021), who emphasized the importance of training and skills development in reintegration programs. Rahim (2022) likewise noted that capacity-building gaps can limit the effectiveness of reintegration efforts. Together, these views suggest that structured training may support both competence and adaptation within institutional environments.

➤ *Mentoring and Monitoring*

Participants acknowledged the role of continuous supervision, guidance, and evaluation during the adjustment period of former rebels. It means that consistent mentoring and monitoring help reinforce discipline, ensure compliance with organizational standards, and support professional development, as reintegration is not a one-time process but requires sustained support and oversight.

This finding reflects Mendoza (2021), who emphasized the importance of institutional support mechanisms in addressing reintegration challenges within law enforcement agencies. Rahim (2022) also described reintegration as an ongoing process that requires continuous guidance and evaluation. These perspectives highlight the importance of structured support systems in facilitating adjustment.

➤ *Social Reconciliation*

Highlights the importance of promoting acceptance and cooperation between former adversaries and the broader community. Participants emphasized that reconciliation is essential for achieving long-term peace and stability, and reintegration efforts should promote mutual understanding and societal acceptance to reduce stigma and strengthen relationships.

This insight draws from Garcia and Ong (2020), who emphasized that peacebuilding involves rebuilding relationships and fostering mutual understanding. Romero (2023) similarly discussed the role of reconciliation and forgiveness in post-conflict governance. These viewpoints suggest that social acceptance may play a key role in sustaining reintegration outcomes.

➤ *Personal Transformation*

The participants recognized that individuals are capable of change when given opportunities and proper support. They emphasized that former rebels can reform and contribute positively to society when they are evaluated based on their present actions rather than their past.

This finding relates to Cruz et al. (2023), who highlighted the role of personal narratives and transformation in reconciliation processes. Garcia and Ong (2020) also emphasized the importance of empathy and re-humanization in post-conflict relationships. These insights highlight the importance of acknowledging behavioral change in supporting reintegration.

➤ *Additional Leadership Challenges*

The participant described that working with former rebels is not only challenging but also adds another layer of responsibility, requiring careful attention to avoid mistakes and operational issues. This indicates that officers are not only performing their regular duties but are also tasked with managing potential risks associated with integration, such as discipline, adjustment, and coordination within the unit. Moreover, this finding suggests that reintegration, while beneficial in promoting transformation and inclusion, may also be perceived as an added operational strain.

This observation is discussed by McAuley (2021), who examined the complexities of leadership in post-conflict policing environments, particularly in managing relationships between former adversaries. Mendoza (2021) also pointed to organizational and operational difficulties associated with reintegration in law enforcement settings. These perspectives indicate that leadership plays a crucial role in addressing the demands of integration.

➤ *Cross-Case Analysis*

Table 5 presents a cross-case analysis of participants' experiences, highlighting similarities and differences across three domains: experiences influencing perceptions, challenges encountered, and lessons for reintegration. The analysis shows both shared patterns and variations among the cases, indicating that while some experiences are commonly observed, others are unique to specific contexts.

Across the cases, positive perceptions toward former rebels were largely shaped by direct interaction and observed contributions. In Cases 1, 2, 8, and 10, participants emphasized the involvement of former rebels in peacebuilding, community activities, and religious engagement, which allowed them to be viewed as partners in maintaining peace and order. However, this pattern was not emphasized in Cases 3, 5, 6, 7, and 9, suggesting that not all participants attributed their perceptions to community-based experiences.

Table 5 Cross-Case Analysis

Domain	Themes	Case Unit		Remarks
		Similar	Different	
Experiences Influencing Perceptions, Attitudes, and Trust Toward Former Rebels	Peacebuilding and Community Development Engagement	Case 1, Case 2, Case 8, Case 10	Case 3, Case 5, Case 6, Case 7, Case 9	Participants observed that involvement of former rebels in peacebuilding and community development activities positively influenced their perceptions and trust. Officers in Cases 1, 2, 8, and 10 recognized their contributions to mediation, community programs, and religious engagement, which allowed them to view former rebels as partners in maintaining peace and order. This pattern was not emphasized by Cases 3, 5, 6, 7, and 9, who did not explicitly attribute their perceptions to community engagement experiences.
	Professional Competence and Commitment	Case 1, Case 2, Case 3, Case 5, Case 6, Case 8, Case 9	Case 7, Case 10	Participants in Cases 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, and 9 developed trust after observing the professional competence and operational contributions of former rebels during police operations and community activities. However, this factor was not strongly emphasized by Cases 7 and 10.
	Recognition of Personal Reform	Case 3, Case 5, Case 7	Case 1, Case 2, Case 6, Case 8, Case 9, Case 10	Participants in Cases 3, 5, and 7 highlighted personal reform as an important factor influencing their perceptions. Observing former rebels follow rules, demonstrate responsibility, and show willingness to become law-abiding citizens strengthened officers' belief that individuals can change. This theme was less explicitly expressed in Cases 1, 2, 6, 8, 9, and 10.
Challenges When Working with Former Rebels	Mindset Adjustment	Case 1, Case 2, Case 3, Case 4, Case 6, Case 8, Case 9	Case 5, Case 7, Case 10	Participants in Cases 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, and 9 reported experiencing psychological adjustment when working with former rebels, even though they had previously perceived them as government adversaries. Officers described the challenge of shifting their mindset from viewing them as enemies to recognizing them as professional colleagues. This difficulty was not explicitly emphasized in Cases 5, 7, and 10.
	Building Mutual Trust	Case 1, Case 2, Case 4, Case 6, Case 8, Case 9, Case 10	Case 3, Case 5, Case 7	Participants in Cases 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, and 10 emphasized that building trust with former rebels was a gradual process that required patience, consistent interaction, and professional cooperation. Initial reactions often involved doubt or caution before trust was eventually established. In contrast, Cases 3, 5, and 7 did not strongly emphasize trust-building as a primary challenge in their experiences.
	Communication and Integration Barriers	Case 3, Case 5, Case 7	Case 1, Case 2, Case 4, Case 6, Case 8, Case 9, Case 10	Participants in Cases 3, 5, and 7 reported communication difficulties and hesitation during early interactions with former rebels, which slowed their integration into the police environment. These participants noted that both sides required time to establish open communication and cooperation. However, this challenge was not explicitly emphasized by Cases 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, and 10.

	Loyalty Issues	Case 4	Case 1, Case 2, Case 3, Case 5, Case 6, Case 7, Case 8, Case 9, Case 10	Only Case 4 reported concerns regarding the possible continued loyalty of former rebels to their previous group. Observed behaviors raised doubts about allegiance and created additional monitoring concerns for officers. This issue was not raised by the other participants, suggesting that loyalty concerns were not widely experienced across the cases.
Lessons and Insights for Policy, Training, and Reintegration	Institutional Reintegration	Case 2, Case 3, Case 5, Case 7, Case 9	Case 1, Case 4, Case 6, Case 8, Case 10	Participants in Cases 2, 5, 7, and 9 emphasized the importance of providing former rebels with opportunities to serve within the PNP or related security institutions. They viewed institutional inclusion as a crucial step in transforming former rebels into productive members of the organization. This perspective was less explicitly emphasized by Cases 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, and 10.
	Multi-Sectoral Partnerships	Case 1, Case 5, Case 7, Case 8, Case 9	Case 2, Case 3, Case 4, Case 6, Case 10	Participants in Cases 1, 5, 7, 8, and 9 highlighted the importance of collaboration among government agencies, local governments, religious leaders, and community organizations in supporting reintegration. A successful reintegration requires coordinated efforts beyond the police organization. This theme was not strongly emphasized by Cases 2, 3, 4, 6, and 10.
	Capacity Building	Case 1, Case 4, Case 6, Case 7, Case 8, Case 9, Case 10	Case 2, Case 3, Case 5	Participants in Cases 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 emphasized the importance of specialized training programs to enhance former rebels' competence in areas such as community relations, investigative procedures, and professional ethics. These participants believed that training strengthens the effectiveness of reintegration within the police organization. This theme was less emphasized by Cases 2, 3, and 5.
	Mentoring and Monitoring	Case 1, Case 2, Case 4, Case 5, Case 6, Case 9	Case 3, Case 7, Case 8, Case 10	Participants in Cases 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, and 9 emphasized the need for continuous mentoring, supervision, and monitoring during the adjustment period of former rebels within the organization. These participants believed that guidance and monitoring help maintain organizational standards and support successful reintegration. This theme was not explicitly stated in Cases 3, 7, 8, and 10.
	Social Reconciliation	Case 1, Case 2, Case 6, Case 8	Case 3, Case 4, Case 5, Case 7, Case 9, Case 10	Participants in Cases 1, 2, 6, and 8 emphasized that reconciliation between former adversaries is essential for long-term peace and stability. They highlighted the importance of societal acceptance and cooperation in supporting reintegration. This perspective was not strongly emphasized by the other participants.
	Personal Transformation	Case 3, Case 6, Case 7, Case 8, Case 9, Case 10	Case 1, Case 2, Case 4, Case 5	Participants in Cases 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 emphasized that individuals with difficult pasts can reform when given opportunities and guidance. They recognized personal transformation as an important foundation for reintegration and societal acceptance. However, this perspective was less emphasized by Cases 1, 2, 4, and 5, who focused more on institutional or operational aspects.

	Additional Leadership Challenges	Case 4	Case 1, Case 2, Case 3, Case 5, Case 6, Case 7, Case 8, Case 9, Case 10	Only Case 4 highlighted leadership difficulties associated with managing former rebels within a police unit. The participant described the need for additional supervision and caution to prevent potential organizational issues. This concern was not raised by the other participants.
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A more consistent pattern across the cases is the influence of professional performance on trust. In Cases 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, and 9, participants gained confidence after observing the competence, discipline, and cooperation of former rebels in operational and law-enforcement activities. In contrast, Cases 7 and 10 placed less emphasis on this factor, indicating that trust formation varied depending on the nature of interaction and exposure.

Only a few participants, particularly in Cases 3, 5, and 7, emphasized behavioral change and personal reform as a key basis for trust. These participants highlighted the importance of observing responsibility, rule-following, and willingness to change. Other cases did not strongly express this perspective, suggesting that recognition of personal transformation was not uniformly experienced.

In terms of challenges, several participants experienced difficulty adjusting their mindset, particularly in Cases 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, and 9. These participants described the challenge of shifting from viewing former rebels as adversaries to accepting them as colleagues. However, this difficulty was not highlighted in Cases 3, 5, 7, and 10, indicating variation in how participants adapted to this transition.

Building trust emerged as a common challenge across Cases 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, and 10. Participants noted that trust required time, consistent interaction, and professional cooperation. In contrast, Cases 5, and 7 did not emphasize trust-building as a primary difficulty, suggesting that trust may have developed more naturally in those contexts.

Communication difficulties were primarily reported in Cases 3, 5, and 7, where participants experienced hesitation and limited interaction during early engagement. These barriers slowed integration and required time to overcome. This challenge was not widely reported in other cases, indicating differences in communication dynamics across participants.

A distinct pattern was observed in Case 4, in which concerns about continued loyalty to former affiliations influenced the participant's perceptions and experience. Unlike the other cases, this participant reported behaviors suggesting lingering influence from previous groups, which required increased supervision and caution. This indicates that loyalty concerns are not common across all cases but can significantly affect individual experiences.

In terms of lessons and insights, several participants emphasized the importance of providing institutional opportunities for former rebels, particularly in Cases 2, 3, 5, 7, and 9. Others highlighted the value of collaboration with external stakeholders, including community groups and religious leaders, as seen in Cases 1, 5, 7, 8, and 9. A strong pattern across most cases was the emphasis on training and capacity development, indicating the need for specialized programs to support effective reintegration.

Many participants also stressed the importance of continuous mentoring and monitoring, particularly in Cases 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, and 9, suggesting that reintegration requires sustained guidance and supervision. Meanwhile, perspectives on reconciliation and personal transformation varied, with only a few cases emphasizing them.

CHAPTER FOUR

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

➤ *Implications for Practice*

The findings of this study provide important implications for practice, particularly for the Philippine National Police and other institutions involved in the reintegration of former rebels. Based on the experiences of commissioned officers, it is evident that reintegration is not a one-time process but a continuous and multifaceted effort that requires institutional, operational, and relational support.

First, the results highlight the need to strengthen community-based engagement programs. Officers who worked closely with former rebels in peacebuilding, mediation, and community development activities developed more positive perceptions and higher levels of trust. This suggests that assigning former rebels to roles involving community interaction can accelerate their acceptance and integration within both the police organization and the communities they serve.

Second, the study emphasizes the importance of performance-based integration. Trust among officers was often developed after observing the competence, discipline, and cooperation of former rebels in actual police operations. This implies that providing meaningful operational responsibilities, rather than limiting them to passive roles, can enhance credibility and foster professional respect within the organization.

Third, there is a clear need to strengthen mentoring and monitoring systems. Many participants highlighted that trust does not develop immediately and requires consistent supervision, guidance, and evaluation. Structured mentoring programs, regular performance assessments, and leadership involvement are essential in ensuring that former rebels remain aligned with organizational standards and expectations.

Fourth, the findings point to the need for training programs targeting the unique backgrounds of former rebels. Training should not only focus on technical skills but also include values formation, organizational orientation, and trust-building mechanisms. This is particularly important in addressing challenges related to adjustment, discipline, and understanding of institutional policies.

Fifth, the study the importance of multi-sectoral collaboration is highlighted the study. Reintegration cannot be achieved solely by the PNP, and coordination with local government units, religious leaders, and community organizations is crucial to providing holistic support systems, including livelihood support, social acceptance, and psychological adjustment.

Lastly, the presence of loyalty concerns in isolated cases suggests the need for careful screening, monitoring, and leadership strategies. While not common across all cases, these challenges indicate that reintegration programs must remain vigilant and adaptive to potential risks.

➤ *Implications for Future Research*

This study contributes to the understanding of reintegration within law enforcement; however, several areas warrant further investigation.

Future studies may explore the long-term effectiveness of reintegration programs, particularly by examining how former rebels perform over extended periods within the police organization.

There is also a need to examine the perspectives of former rebels themselves. While this study focused on commissioned officers, understanding how former rebels perceive their own integration, challenges, and transformation would provide a more comprehensive view of the reintegration process.

Additionally, future research may investigate the impact of leadership on the integration of former rebels. Since leadership played an important role in shaping experiences, examining how different leadership approaches influence trust, discipline, and performance could offer valuable insights for organizational management.

Comparative studies across different regions or security institutions may also be conducted to determine whether similar patterns exist in other contexts. This would help identify whether the findings of this study are unique to the BARMM setting or applicable to broader reintegration programs.

Finally, further research may focus on policy evaluation, particularly assessing the effectiveness of existing reintegration frameworks and identifying areas for improvement in training, monitoring, and inter-agency collaboration.

➤ *Concluding Remarks*

Conducting this study was both a professional and personal journey. As a researcher working simultaneously in the field, I had the unique opportunity to engage directly with commissioned officers across different stations and operational environments.

Throughout the interviews, I realized that perceptions toward former rebels are not fixed but are shaped by experience. Many officers initially carried doubt, hesitation, and caution, influenced by years of conflict and the perception of former rebels as adversaries. However, as they worked together in operations, community programs, and daily tasks, these perceptions gradually evolved. Trust was not given easily; it was built through consistent actions, demonstrated competence, and observable change.

At the same time, this study also revealed that reintegration is not without challenges. I encountered accounts of hesitation, communication barriers, and in some cases, lingering concerns about loyalty. These experiences reminded me that integration is a complex process that requires patience, strong leadership, and continuous effort from both the organization and the individuals involved.

Personally, this research changed my own perspective. I learned that transformation is possible, but it is not automatic. It must be supported, guided, and earned. I also realized that trust in this context is not based on words but on actions over time. The experiences shared by the participants showed that former rebels can become partners in peace and law enforcement, but this depends on how institutions manage their transition.

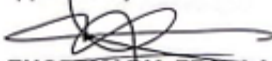
This study reinforced my belief that reintegration is both an institutional responsibility and a human process. It requires not only policies and programs but also understanding, patience, and a willingness to see beyond the past. Through this research, I have come to appreciate the complexity of reintegration and the importance of creating systems that support both accountability and transformation.

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APPENDICES

LETTERS TO VALIDATORS

 UM The University of Mindanao	PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS [] Main [] Branch _____ LETTER TO THE VALIDATORS
January 13, 2026	
Dr. William A. Revisa Professor UM Professional School Matina Campus	
Dear Dr. Revisa ,	
The undersigned would like to request your approval to be one of the evaluators in the research study entitled, "THEN ENEMY, NOW FRIEND: A MULTI-CASE STUDY OF COMMISSIONED OFFICERS WORKING WITH FORMERS REBELS IN THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE" as a requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Criminal Justice with Specialization in Criminology. Undoubtedly, your expertise would make the instrument rich and substantive in content. Attached to this request is the actual print-out of the manuscript, informed consent form, interview guide and validation rating sheets. Your comments and suggestions will be a great help in the realization of this study. Looking forward for your favorable response on this request. Thank you and God bless.	
Sincerely,  Gretchen Mae A. Membredo Researcher	
Recommending Approval:  DR. NESTOR C. NABE Research Adviser	
Approved by:  ENGR. MARIA FE Y. LAGSADO ✓ Research Coordinator Rev. # 0/ Effectivity: January 2024	

**PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS**

[] Main [] Branch _____

LETTER TO THE VALIDATORS

January 13, 2026

Dr. Jovanie S. Coronas
Professor
UM Professional School
Matina Campus

Dear **Dr. Coronas**,

The undersigned would like to request your approval to be one of the evaluators in the research study entitled, **"THEN ENEMY, NOW FRIEND: A MULTI-CASE STUDY OF COMMISSIONED OFFICERS WORKING WITH FORMERS REBELS IN THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE"** as a requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Criminal Justice with Specialization in Criminology. Undoubtedly, your expertise would make the instrument rich and substantive in content.

Attached to this request is the actual print-out of the manuscript, informed consent form, interview guide and validation rating sheets. Your comments and suggestions will be a great help in the realization of this study.

Looking forward for your favorable response on this request. Thank you and God bless.

Sincerely,


Gretchen Mae A. Membredo
Researcher

Recommending Approval:


DR. NESTOR C. NABE
Research Adviser

Approved by:


ENGR. MARIA FE Y. LACSADO
Research Coordinator

Rev. # 0/ Effectivity: January 2024

**PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS**

[] Main [] Branch _____

LETTER TO THE VALIDATORS

January 13, 2026

Dr. Carmina Beatriz C. Deocampo
Professor
UM Professional School
Matina Campus

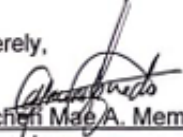
Dear **Dr. Deocampo**,

The undersigned would like to request your approval to be one of the evaluators in the research study entitled, **"THEN ENEMY, NOW FRIEND: A MULTI-CASE STUDY OF COMMISSIONED OFFICERS WORKING WITH FORMER REBELS IN THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE"** as a requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Criminal Justice with Specialization in Criminology. Undoubtedly, your expertise would make the instrument rich and substantive in content.

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Sincerely,


Gretchen Mae A. Membredo
Researcher

Recommending Approval:


DR. NESTOR C. NABE
Research Adviser

Approved by:


ENGR. MARIA FE Y. LACSADO
Research Coordinator

Rev. # 0/ Effectivity: January 2024

 UM The University of Mindanao	PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS [] Main [] Branch _____
	LETTER TO THE VALIDATORS

January 13, 2026

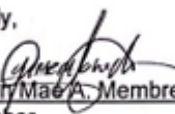
Dr. Rowela C. Pecson
Professor
UM Professional School
Matina Campus

Dear **Dr. Pecson**,

The undersigned would like to request your approval to be one of the evaluators in the research study entitled, **"THEN ENEMY, NOW FRIEND: A MULTI-CASE STUDY OF COMMISSIONED OFFICERS WORKING WITH FORMER REBELS IN THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE"** as a requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Criminal Justice with Specialization in Criminology. Undoubtedly, your expertise would make the instrument rich and substantive in content.

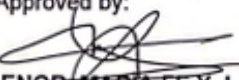
Attached to this request is the actual print-out of the manuscript, informed consent form, interview guide and validation rating sheets. Your comments and suggestions will be a great help in the realization of this study.

Looking forward for your favorable response on this request. Thank you and God bless.

Sincerely,

Gretchen Mae A. Membredo
Researcher

Recommending Approval:

DR. NESTOR C. NABE
Research Adviser

Approved by:

ENOR MARIA FE Y. LACSADO
Research Coordinator

Rev. # 0/ Effectivity: January 2024

 UM The University of Mindanao	PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS [] Main [] Branch _____ LETTER TO THE VALIDATORS
January 13, 2026	
Dr. Joel B. Tan Professor UM Professional School Matina Campus	
Dear Dr. Tan,	
The undersigned would like to request your approval to be one of the evaluators in the research study entitled, "THEN ENEMY, NOW FRIEND: A MULTI-CASE STUDY OF COMMISSIONED OFFICERS WORKING WITH FORMERS REBELS IN THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE" as a requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Criminal Justice with Specialization in Criminology. Undoubtedly, your expertise would make the instrument rich and substantive in content. Attached to this request is the actual print-out of the manuscript, informed consent form, interview guide and validation rating sheets. Your comments and suggestions will be a great help in the realization of this study. Looking forward for your favorable response on this request. Thank you and God bless.	
Sincerely,  <u>Gretchen Mae A. Membredo</u> Researcher	
Recommending Approval:  <u>DR. NESTOR C. NABE</u> Research Adviser	
Approved by:  <u>ENGR. MARIA FE Y. LAGSADO</u> Research Coordinator	
Rev. # 0/ Effectivity: January 2024	



PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS

[] Main [] Branch _____

LETTER TO THE VALIDATORS

January 13, 2026

Dr. Erika Grace P. Rojas
Professor
Southway College of Technology
Agusan del Sur

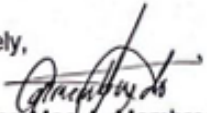
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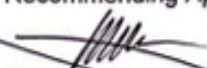
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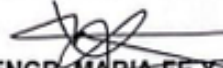
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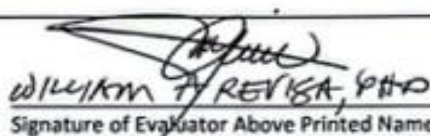

DR. NESTOR C. NABE
Research Adviser

Approved by:


ENGR. MARIA FE Y. LACSADO
Research Coordinator

Rev. # 0/ Effectivity: January 2024

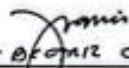
VALIDATION SHEETS FOR THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

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F-13550-031 / Rev. #0/ Effectivity: February 1, 2019

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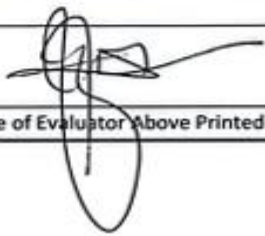
 UM The University of Mindanao	PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS ☒ Main ☐ Branch _____ VALIDATION SHEET FOR RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE - QUALITATIVE
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Name of Evaluator : DR. ROWELA C. PECSON
 Degree : PhD
 Position : Professor
 To the Evaluator : Kindly check column which fits your evaluation for the item.

RATING: Number of YES marks
☐ 10 Very Good ☐ 6-7 May be upgraded if revised
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F-13550-031/ Rev. #0/ Effectivity: February 1, 2019

 UM The University of Mindanao	PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS ☒ Main ☐ Branch _____ VALIDATION SHEET FOR RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE - QUALITATIVE
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Name of Evaluator : DR. ERIKA GRACE P. ROJAS
 Degree : PhD
 Position : Professor
 To the Evaluator : Kindly check column which fits your evaluation for the item.

RATING: Number of YES marks
☐ 10 Very Good ☐ 6-7 May be upgraded if revised
☒ 8-9 Good ☐ 0-5 For revalidation

ITEMS	YES	NO
Ethics		
1. Introduction (purpose, confidentiality, duration and way of conduct and closing components for additional comments) are provided.	/	
2. Informed consent is included.	/	
Artistry		
3. Script is included/built in, so interview can introduce, guide and conclude the interview in a consistent manner.	/	
4. Questions are appropriate to the study enhancing the possibility of storytelling and narratives.	/	
Rigor		
5. Questions are open-ended to encourage in depth responses; avoiding close-ended questions which are answered by "Yes" or "No".	/	
6. Questions are stated in the affirmative.	/	
7. Probe questions are provided.	/	
8. Questions are logically ordered asking the highest priority first. Opinion questions follow information questions.	/	
9. Questions are stated in clear and simple terms.	/	
10. Number of questions can be covered within 60-90 minutes, not exceeding 15 open-ended items (probes excluded) for every research questions, except special cases.	/	

Title of Approved Research : Then Enemy, Now Friend: A Multi-Case Study of Commissioned Officers Working with Former Rebels in the PNP

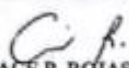
Name of Researcher : Gretchen Mae A. Membredo

Degree Enrolled : PhD

Research Adviser : Dr. Nestor C. Nabe

Date of Evaluation of Questionnaire: January 14, 2026

Remarks of the Evaluator : _____


ERIKA GRACE P. ROJAS, RCrim, Ph.D
 Signature of Evaluator Above Printed Name

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RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

INTERVIEW GUIDE		
THEN ENEMY, NOW FRIEND: A MULTI-CASE STUDY OF COMMISSIONED OFFICERS WORKING WITH FORMER REBELS IN THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE		
I. General Profile of the Interviewee		
1. Name and Rank: _____ (Optional)		
2. Unit/Office Assignment: _____		

II Research Questions		
RESEARCH QUESTIONS	MAIN QUESTIONS	PROBING QUESTIONS
1. What experiences influenced your perceptions, attitudes, and trust toward former rebels in the PNP?	1.1 Can you describe the experiences that have shaped and influenced your perceptions, attitudes, level of trust, and professional relationship with former rebels in the Philippine National Police?	1.1.1 How did your perceptions of former rebels change after working with them in the PNP? 1.1.2 What experiences influenced your level of trust toward them? 1.1.3 Were there situations that made you doubt or reassess them, and how did you respond? Can you cite some of these situations? 1.1.4 How would you describe your current relationship with former rebels in your unit? 1.1.5 What past experiences you have had with former rebels that helped shape or grounded your beliefs and trust toward them?

2. What challenges and adjustments did commissioned officers experience when working with people who were once considered enemies?	2.1 Can you describe the challenges you encountered and the adjustments you made as a commissioned officer working with individuals who were once considered enemies?	2.1.1 Can you describe your overall experience working with former rebels who are now part of the PNP? 2.1.2 What were your initial reactions and main difficulties when you first started working with them? 2.1.3 What personal or professional adjustments did you make to work effectively with them? 2.1.4 Which challenge was the most difficult for you and why? 2.1.5 How do you find working with former rebels?
3. What lessons and insights can be drawn from these experiences to improve policies, training, and reintegration programs?	3.1 From your experience working with former rebels in the PNP, what improvements do you believe should be made to existing policies, training programs, and reintegration efforts?	3.1.1 Looking back, what important lessons have you learned from working with former rebels in the PNP? 3.1.2 What helped make the working relationship successful, and what made it difficult? 3.1.3 What do you think the PNP did well in integrating former rebels? 3.1.4 What areas do you think need improvement—whether in training, leadership, or support systems? 3.1.5 If you were to advise PNP leaders or policymakers, what changes would you suggest to improve reintegration programs?
		3.1.6 What do you think people or the society learn from your experience? 3.1.7 What message would you like to share to fellow PNP officers about your experience? 3.1.8 If you could turn back time, what would you do differently?

UMERC CERTIFICATE

 ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE (UMERC) Ground Floor, Professional Schools Building Ma-a Matina Campus, Davao City Telephone: 0908 304 6228 umethicsreviewer@umindanao.edu.ph			
FORM 2.6 Certificate of Approval			
Date FEBRUARY 28, 2026			
This is to certify that the following protocol and related documents have been granted approval by the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee for implementation.			
UMERC Protocol No.	UMERC-2026-034	Sponsor Protocol No	N/A
Principal Investigator/s	GRETCHEN MAE A. MEMBREDO	Sponsor	N/A
Title	THEN ENEMY, NOW FRIEND: A MULTI-CASE STUDY OF COMMISSIONED OFFICERS WORKING WITH FORMER REBELS IN THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE		
Protocol Version No.	3	Version Date	FEBRUARY 18, 2026
ICF Version No.	3	Version Date	FEBRUARY 18, 2026
Other documents			
Members of the research team			
Study sites	BARMM		
Type of review	☐ Expedited ☒ Full board	Duration of Approval: February 28, 2026 – August 28, 2026	Approved Meeting Date: February 28, 2026
UMERC Chairperson	Signature	Date	
NORMELIZA E. MORALES, Ph.D.		FEBRUARY 28, 2026	
Note: Please be reminded to inform/email the UMERC office if any of the following occur: Any changes to the composition of the study team, study site, protocol, or related documents previously submitted.			
FORM 2.6: CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL		REV. #1 / EFFECTIVITY: APRIL 1, 2022	
 ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE (UMERC) Ground Floor, Professional Schools Building Ma-a Matina Campus, Davao City Telephone: 0908 304 6228 umethicsreviewer@umindanao.edu.ph			
- Any Reportable Negative Events (RNE) and/or Serious Adverse Events (SAE) during the conduct of the study that may affect the safety, dignity, or well-being of participants or the study team, as well as the integrity of data - Any protocol violation or deviation that compromises the safety and welfare of participants or the credibility and integrity of data. - Termination of the research, data gathering, and/or participant recruitment. - Expiration of ethical clearance requiring renewal or extension.			

LETTER APPROVED FROM THE REGIONAL OFFICE OF PRO BAR

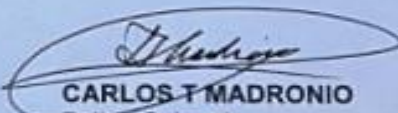
	Republic of the Philippines NATIONAL POLICE COMMISSION PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE POLICE REGIONAL OFFICE BAR Camp BGen Salipada K Pendatun, Parang, Maguindanao del Norte	
RETD(A)-280330-363 MEMORANDUM	DATE: 31 MAR 2026 APPROVED/DISAPPROVED  RD, PRO BAR	
FOR : Regional Director FROM : Chief, RETD SUBJECT : Request for Approval of the Regional Director DATE : March 30, 2026		

1. Reference: Request Letter from PSSg Gretchen Mae A Membredo dated February 19, 2026.

2. This pertains to the request of PSSg Gretchen Mae A Membredo to conduct a study in our area of responsibility in line with her dissertation entitled "THEN ENEMY, NOW FRIEND: A MULTI-CASE STUDY OF COMMISSIONED OFFICERS WORKING WITH FORMER REBELS IN THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE".

3. In view thereof, the undersigned respectfully requests the approval of the Regional Director regarding the said request.

4. For perusal.


CARLOS T MADRONIO
 Police Colonel


BAGONG PILIPINAS

"Bagong PNP para sa Bagong Pilipinas: Serbisyon Mabilis, Tapat, at Nararamdaman"
 SECURITY ADVICE: This Document and all the information stated herein are intended for the recipient's official internal use only and should not be disclosed to any other agency or third party without the written consent of the appropriate authority.

CERTIFICATE OF APPEARANCE DURING THE CONDUCT OF THE STUDY



Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL POLICE COMMISSION
PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE
POLICE REGIONAL OFFICE BAR
Camp BGen Salipada K Pendatun, Parang, Maguindanao del Norte



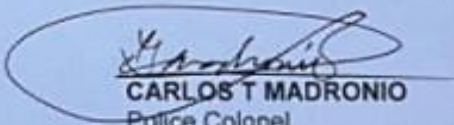
CERTIFICATE OF APPEARANCE

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that **Ms. Gretchen Mae A Membredo** appeared at and visited Police Regional Office BAR to conduct research study and interviewed qualified PCOs in relation to her dissertation entitled "Then Enemy, Now Friend. A Multi-case Study of Commissioned Officers working with Former Rebels in the PNP".

This certification is being issued upon the request of the above-named PNCO to support her dissertation.

Issued this 11th day of April, 2026 at Camp, Brigadier General Salipada K Pendatun, Parang, Maguindanao del Norte.



CARLOS T MADRONIO
Police Colonel
Chief, RETD



BAGONG PILIPINAS
"Bagong PNP para sa Bagong Pilipinas: Serbisyonang Mabilis, Tapat, at Nararamdaman"

CERTIFICATE OF RESEARCH PRESENTATION



SAMPLE OF INFORM CONSENT FORM

 UM The University of Mindanao	University of Mindanao Informed Consent Form (ICF) (18 years old and above)	UMERC - 006 Rev. 01 / December 1, 2016 Approved by: Control No.: _____
University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee Matina, Davao City		
Informed Consent Form for <u>THEN ENEMY, NOW FRIEND: A MULTI-CASE STUDY OF COMMISSIONED OFFICERS WORKING WITH FORMER REBELS IN THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE</u> Name of the Researcher: Gretchen Mae A. Membredo Institution: University of Mindanao		
INTRODUCTION You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by <u>Gretchen Mae A. Membredo</u>, at the University of Mindanao, because you fit the inclusion criteria for informants of our study. This study is conducted solely for academic research purposes as part of a doctoral dissertation at the University of Mindanao. Participation in this study is not part of any official Philippine National Police (PNP) evaluation, assessment, monitoring, inspection, or administrative process. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary and is not command-directed. No supervisor, commander, or PNP official has required, requested, or instructed you to participate. Your decision to participate or not participate will not be reported to, shared with, or known by your supervisors, commanders, or any PNP authority. Please read the information below, and ask questions about anything you do not understand, before deciding whether to participate. Please take as much time as you need to read the consent form. You may also decide to discuss participation with your family or friends. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form. You will be given a copy of this form.		
PURPOSE OF THE STUDY <u>The purpose of this study is to explore and understand the lived experiences of commissioned officers of the Philippine National Police (PNP) who work alongside former rebels in the BARMM region. Specifically, the study seeks to examine how officers perceive, interpret, and navigate their roles in reconciliation, cooperation, and peacebuilding after years of armed conflict.</u> <u>The study aims to generate insights that may help improve peace-oriented policing, training programs, reintegration strategies, and policy formulation related to post-conflict governance and restorative justice.</u>		
STUDY PROCEDURES <u>If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in a one-on-one, in-depth interview conducted by the researcher. The interview will use open-ended questions focusing on your experiences, perceptions, challenges, and reflections related to working with former rebels.</u> <u>The interview is expected to last approximately 60 to 90 minutes and will be conducted at a secure and mutually agreed-upon location. With your permission, the interview will be audio-recorded to ensure accuracy of data. You may decline recording if you wish.</u> <u>You may choose not to answer any question that makes you uncomfortable and may stop the interview at any time without penalty.</u>		



University of Mindanao
Informed Consent Form (ICF)
(18 years old and above)

UMERC - 006
 Rev. 01 / December 1, 2016
 Approved by:

Control No.: _____

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS
The risks associated with this study are minimal. However, some interview questions may involve recalling sensitive experiences, emotional challenges, or professional dilemmas related to peacebuilding and post-conflict interactions. This may cause mild emotional or psychological discomfort.

If at any point you feel uneasy or distressed, you may choose to skip questions, take a break, or withdraw from the study entirely. Your well-being will always be prioritized.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY
You may not receive any direct personal benefit from participating in this study. However, your participation may contribute to a deeper understanding of peace-oriented policing and reconciliation within law enforcement institutions. The findings of this study may benefit: The Philippine National Police, by informing peace-building strategies and training programs; Policymakers and peace advocates, through evidence-based insights on post-conflict collaboration; Academic institutions and researchers, by contributing to criminological and peace studies literature; and Society in general, by supporting sustainable peace, justice, and strong institutions in conflict-affected areas.

CONFIDENTIALITY
All information you provide will be kept strictly confidential as permitted by law. Your name, rank, assignment, and any identifying details will not appear in any report, publication, or presentation.

Codes or pseudonyms will be used in transcripts and research outputs. Audio recordings and transcripts will be stored securely and will only be accessed by the researcher and authorized academic supervisors. Data will be disposed of properly after the completion of the study.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL
Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty, loss of benefits, or impact on your professional standing in the Philippine National Police.

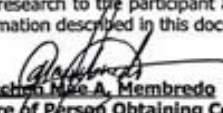
Choosing not to participate will not affect your work, rank, or relationship with your organization or the University of Mindanao.

INVESTIGATOR'S CONTACT INFORMATION
If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact the researcher at the University of Mindanao, Matina, Davao City through mobile phone number (08538470079) or through email gretchenmaemembredo5@gmail.com; or if you need to see him/her, he/she can be located at the Office of the Provincial Community Affairs Development Unit, Maguindanao Del Sur, Police Provincial Office, Camp Datu Akilan Ampatuan, Shariff Aguak, Maguindanao del Sur.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT
If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about your right as a research participant or the research in general and are unable to contact the research team, or if you want to talk to someone independent of the research team, please contact the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee (UMERC) at 0908 304 6228.

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT'S CONSENT

I have read the information provided above. I have been given a chance to ask questions. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form. I can withdraw my consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty.

	University of Mindanao Informed Consent Form (ICF) (18 years old and above)	UMERC - 006 Rev. 01 / December 1, 2016 Approved by: Control No.: _____
☒ "I agree to audio recording." ☒ "I understand that I should avoid sharing classified/operationally sensitive information." ☒ "I understand the confidentiality."		
 Signature above Printed Name of Participant		<u>January 13, 2026</u> Date Signed
To be accomplished by the Researcher Obtaining Consent: I have explained the research to the participant and answered all his/her questions. I believe that he/she understands the information described in this document and freely consents to participate.		
 Gretchen Mae A. Membredo Name and Signature of Person Obtaining Consent		<u>January 13, 2026</u> Date Signed