

WORLD EDUCATION CONNECT

ISSN (Online) 2799-0842
ISSN (Print) 2799-130X

MULTIDISCIPLINARY E-PUBLICATION

Vol. IV Issue VII, July 2024

Monthly Issue

International Circulation



Pinagpala
PUBLISHING SERVICES

NBDB Reg. No. 3269

DTI Business Reg. No. 3034433

TIN 293-150-678 / Business Permit No. 8183

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AWARENESS ON DISCIPLINARY POLICIES AND STUDENTS' ATTITUDES AMONG CRIMINOLOGY STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN THE PROVINCE OF TARLAC



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Article Info

Article history:

NTP Date: N/A

Research Duration: **6 MONTHS**

REC Acceptance Date:
N/A

Keywords:

Awareness,

Disciplinary Policies,

Students' Attitude,

Criminology Students,

Higher Education Institutions
(HEI's)

ABSTRACT

This paper aims to evaluate the awareness of disciplinary policies and the attitudes of criminology students in higher education institutions in Tarlac province. The study involved 473 student respondents from five private colleges and one university offering the Bachelor of Science in Criminology program.

A quantitative design employing an evaluative and descriptive-correlational approach was used to assess the students' awareness of their institution's disciplinary policies and their attitudes towards the school. The finding indicate that students have a high level of awareness and a positive attitude towards their schools, with a moderately positive relationship between the two. The study concludes that increased awareness of disciplinary policies is associated with more positive student attitudes towards in their institutions.

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World Education Connect

Multidisciplinary e-Publication

Volume IV, Issue VII (July 2024), p.39-72 International

ISSN (Online) 2799-0842 / ISSN (Print) 2799-130X

Published Online at www.pinagpalapublishing.com

Publisher: Pinagpala Publishing Services

DTI Reg. No. 303443 / TIN 293-150-678/ Bus. Permit No. 8183

National Book Development Board (NBDB) Reg. No. 3269

1. INTRODUCTION

The Problem and its Background

Discipline is crucial for every student, particularly in the College of Criminal Justice Education. Students should always be aware of their respective school or university's existing disciplinary policies, as they need to prepare for life after school. When students complete their chosen course, they will face the realities of real life. Their training and discipline in pursuing a career in criminal justice must start in college to ensure their success in the profession.

While still in college, students must behave appropriately to avoid straying off course. No parents want their child to end up in jail after school. Even if they graduate, a lack of discipline could jeopardize their career prospects. This lack of discipline may lead to short-lived employment due to excessive pride or frequent conflicts with co-workers. It is crucial for them to learn how to get along, especially after completing the criminology course and entering the workforce. Upon finishing the criminology course, they will step into the professional field.

Educating young people acts as a tool for crime control. As their level of educational rises, the chances of them engaging in criminal activities decline. However, there are situations where strict school discipline contributes to the "school-to-prison pipeline" or the pushout of students from school. Students' minor misconduct should not immediately be referred to law enforcement or the court; instead, it should be initially addressed through guidance counseling. This issue is particularly troubling nationwide as numerous school discipline policies cause children and youth to be pushed out of schools, discouraging them from seeking higher education. The "school-to-prison pipeline" is established by strict discipline policies and practices that direct youth from schools into the justice system through direct referrals to law enforcement and the courts, along with excessive punishments that can lead to students being expelled from school.

Graduates of the Bachelor of Science in Criminology program from various higher education institutions have become highly competitive in securing employment in both private and government sectors. To meet this goal, graduates need to pass the Board Examination for Criminologist, Civil Service Examination, and/or NAPOLCOM Entrance Examination (Soratos, et al., 2013).

The household or parents are typically the first institution an individual interacts with; they are initially responsible for socializing with youth, regulating their behavior, and taking appropriate steps to manage them within a structured environment. Frequent family conflicts contribute to school difficulties, truancy, and neglect, as well as to deviant and irresponsible behavior. Juveniles who are rejected by their families often seek support from their peers. The becoming of juvenile gangs is an incarnation of young people's need to be embraced and feel a sense of belonging (Soratos, et al., 2013).

Today, punitive disciplinary procedures are no longer in issue. The Anti-Bullying Act of 2013 illustrates this shift, as it does not specify any penalties for students who violate the law. The law only provides that all elementary and secondary schools are directed to adopt policies to address the existence of bullying in their respective institutions (Correlating Secs. 3 and 6 of Republic Act 10627) (L. dela Fuente, C. 2021)

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Discipline also considers control gained by implementing obedience, and it pertains to the well-ordered behavior defined by codes of conduct or rules set forth by institutions for their fellowmen. It may also refer to as controlled behavior or the process of controlling behavior of an individual (Antonio, et al., 2012). Furthermore, discipline encompasses self-discipline and the development of skills that help individuals resist temptation, behave appropriately, and function both independently and cooperatively in ways that promote personal growth and community well-being. Discipline is often viewed narrowly as punishment or negative consequences, carrying a negative connotation. However, it is closely related to guidance, education, and skill development. Its primary objectives encompass promoting coordinated efforts, cultivating self-control and personal character, and fostering a sense of organization and effectiveness (Antonio, et al., 2012).

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was established to protect children and students from all forms of physical or mental violence, harm, neglect, exploitation, and abuse, including sexual abuse. It also recognizes the child's right to education and emphasizes the progressive realization of his right, ensuring equal opportunities for all. Therefore, governments are required to implement measures that encourage regular attendance and reduce dropout rates. Consequently, it is mandated that all necessary actions be taken to ensure that school disciplinary practices are administered in a manner that respects the child's dignity and aligns with the principles outlined in the CRC and Deped Order No. 40, S. 2012 (Bayucca, S. (2020).

The saying "Prevention is better than cure" can be likened to the purpose of discipline. It aims to prevent acts that violate the institution's policies, rules, and regulations before they become widespread, much like a contagious disease that others might replicate. Discipline serves as a form of control that safeguards the interests of the institution and its members. It entails correcting or penalizing individuals who fail to adhere to specified forms of behavior, conduct, or rules as outlined in institutional policies regulations. Through this, good human relations can be maintained. Effective discipline of subordinates within the institutional policy framework. Educational institutions play a crucial role in preventing delinquency by socializing students while they are away from their parents and protecting them from delinquent influences. As mandated by the Constitution, educational institutions must reinforce ethical and spiritual values, foster moral character, and promote personal discipline, among other responsibilities (Sec. 3 [2], Art. XIV of the 1987 Constitution (Desierto, D. (2010).

While parents provide socialization and exercise informal social control over their children at home, youth in the nation spend a significant portion of their day at school. The commitment of adolescents to their schooling can serve as a buffer against delinquency. Teachers in school act as secondary source of socialization, supplementing the role of parents. The time spent by students in school can effectively protect them from interactions with delinquent individuals. Like parents, school plays a role in exerting informal social control over students by instilling moral norms and shaping their perceptions of crime and criminals. While schools are crucial institutions of social control during childhood and adolescence, poor attachment to school can lead to negative outcomes later in life. Schools are increasingly becoming an environment of strict discipline, as evidenced by the widespread use of metal detectors, surveillance cameras, school resource officers, and mandatory exclusionary in today's school settings. If a student brought a gun to school, the policy mandated the automatic expulsion of that student (Gottfredson, M. R. (2017).

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Currently, these policies have been broadened to encompass additional offenses such as possession of weapons or drugs on school grounds, physical altercations, bullying, and persistent classroom disruptions. Especially, school suspensions are increasingly used to address disruptions in classrooms. One of the aims of these policies is to establish a safer environment within schools for the entire student body.

Furthermore, mandatory policies are used to determine the individuals who violate the rules and inculcate the seriousness of their offense to other students, thus implicating specific and general deterrence (Scaggs, (2011).

Student's options for a non-punitive approach that fosters positive behavior and promotes a positive school environment. Implementation positive reinforcement is preferable as it motivates students to excel in school, rather than using punishments like suspension or expulsion that hinder their personal growth.

It extends beyond prior studies on the Latino/a threat in schools by exploring potential contextual connections. It investigates whether the influence of schools' Latino/a student composition is more pronounced in institutions where punitive discipline is not already more probable, and where school personnel and policy makers have greater discretion (Welch, K., & Payne, A. A. (2018).

Distinct policies and rules governing the disciplinary process should reflect the overall goals and principles of the institution's administration. These disciplinary policies, rules, and prescribed sanctions must be documented and made accessible to all members of the institution. These written policies and rules serve as a code of conduct for students and guide the school administration in maintaining effective leadership and making fair decisions.

Policies and rules should be disseminated thoroughly to all stakeholders to prevent inconsistencies in provision and implementation. When new rules are introduced, the school administration should ensure the students and staff are fully informed and understand the details of the new rules. Failure to do so may render the policies and rules ineffective.

The level of discipline within an institution is often reflected in the degree of orderliness in its operations. This orderliness is closely linked to student behavior, which is significantly influenced by the administration's effectiveness in carrying out its responsibilities. The administration is responsible for ensuring compliance with organizational rules, regardless of personal preferences. Students are obligated to follow the rules and regulations, regardless of their personal opinions (Atonio, et al., 2012).

The Constitution underscores the importance of the family by recognizing its sanctity and mandating the state to protect and strengthen it as a functional and independent social institution (Sec. 12, Art. XI of the 1987 Constitution). Additionally, the Constitution acknowledges the Filipino family as the foundation of the nation and commits to enhancing its unity and supporting its overall development (Sec. 1 Art. XV of the Constitution Lazo, R. S., 2009).

Consequently, as an integral part of the community, the family must be shielded from crime and delinquency. In the field of criminal justice, the community must be fortified as it forms the core of the Criminal Justice System, which is instrumental in addressing crimes. The criminology program's mission is to graduates who possess both professional competence and moral integrity. These graduates can deliver efficient and effective services in various domains, including crime prevention, crime detection and investigation, law enforcement, and offender custody and rehabilitation, among other related fields.

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) offering criminology programs are viewed as crucial educational institutions actively involved in consistently producing graduates. These

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graduates are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to address criminality in the country, as well as the capability to navigate the challenges posed by globalization in the criminology field.

Therefore, the Commission in Higher Education adopts and issues these revised policies and standards for the Bachelor of Science in criminology degree. The Criminology program gained popularity in the country from 1987 until the early 2000's shortly after its first Criminology board examination. Fourteen years later, Republic Act No. 6506 was enacted, originally passed into law in July 1973 by former Congressman Teudolo C. Natividad.

Due to the demand for Bachelor of Science in Criminology graduates, alumni from various tertiary institutions have become highly competitive in securing employment in both the private and government sectors. To achieve this, graduates must pass the Criminologist Board Examination, Civil Service examination, and/or NAPOLCOM Entrance Examination (Soratos, et al., 2013).

In addition to holding necessary qualifications, a criminologist must enhance their educational credentials to secure better positions or employment opportunities. For instance, to become a dean or instructor in the Criminal Justice Department, a criminologist must have completed a Doctor of Philosophy in Criminal Justice or a Master of Science in Criminal Justice with a specialization, respectively (Sec. 10 & 11 of CMO 21, S. 2005) (Pacatang, D. H. Q., 2016). Similarly, for a policeman to be considered for the role of Case Manager is a police commissioned officer who has been previously certified as a police investigator (NAPOLCOM Memorandum Circular 2013-002).

Criminology students are trained to become police officers. Their education should encompass not only technical skills in areas such as firearms, ammunition, ballistics, and criminal tracking, but also aim to develop well-rounded personalities, emphasizing the importance of character alongside technical expertise. This principle is especially crucial in the 21st century, a time when law enforcement faces significant challenges, and police officers are sometimes implicated in the very crimes they are meant to prevent. Future law enforcers should be committed to protecting society from all forms of criminality, rather than becoming criminals themselves. Criminology students need to grow into well-rounded individuals without any traces of antisocial personality disorders (MH Burrows, 2017).

Disciplinary Awareness and Real-World Preparation: The introduction emphasizes the importance of discipline and awareness of school policies for students in criminal justice education. However, it lacks a detailed analysis of how current disciplinary policies specially prepare students for real-world scenarios in the criminal justice field. A deeper exploration of practical examples and case studies showing successful transition from college discipline to professional conduct could bridge this gap.

Based on these concepts, the researcher aims to assess the awareness of disciplinary policies and student's attitudes among criminology students in higher education institutions in the province of Tarlac.

Statement of the Problem

This study assessed the students' awareness of disciplinary policies and their attitude towards the school. This study was conducted among the students in the College of Criminology Department in various Higher Education Institutions in the province of Tarlac.

Specifically, it answered the following questions:

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1. What is the profile of the students in the College of Criminology in terms of:
 - 1.1 age,
 - 1.2 gender, and
 - 1.3 year level?
2. What is the profile of the HEI's offering criminology program in the Province of Tarlac in terms of:
 - 2.1 enrollment size,
 - 2.2 number of years of existence of the criminology program,
 - 2.3 number of faculty members in the program and their status (full time or part-time), and
 - 2.4 accreditation status of the criminology program.
3. What is the assessment of the students on their awareness regarding the disciplinary policies in the College of Criminology in terms of:
 - 3.1 types of disciplinary policies,
 - 3.2 suitability of disciplinary policies,
 - 3.3 mechanisms to ensure compliance to the discipline policies, and
 - 3.4 administration of discipline policies?
4. What is the assessment of the students on their attitude among the schools in terms of:
 - 4.1 attachment to school,
 - 4.2 commitment to school,
 - 4.3 involvement in school activities, and
 - 4.4 belief in school discipline?
5. Is there a significant difference in the assessment of the respondents on their awareness regarding the disciplinary policies in the College of Criminology when their profile is considered?
6. Is there a significant difference in the assessment of the respondents regarding their attitude among the schools when their profile is considered.
7. Is there a significant relationship between the respondent's awareness of disciplinary policies and their attitude among the schools?
8. Based on the results of the study, what recommendations may be formulated to enhance the awareness of disciplinary policies and promote positive student attitudes among the College of Criminology program?

Hypothesis

Based on the data collected and analyzed, the researcher has drawn the following hypotheses:

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the assessment of the students on their awareness regarding the disciplinary policies in the College of Criminology when their profile is considered.

Ho2: There is a no significant difference in the assessment of the students regarding their attitude among the school when profile is considered.

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between the students' awareness of disciplinary policies and their attitude among the school.

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Published Online at www.pinagpalapublishing.com

Publisher: Pinagpala Publishing Services

DTI Reg. No. 303443 / TIN 293-150-678/ Bus. Permit No. 8183

National Book Development Board (NBDB) Reg. No. 3269

Scope and Delimitation

This study examines the awareness of disciplinary policies and students' attitudes among criminology students in Higher Education Institutions in the province of Tarlac. Students from colleges and schools outside of Tarlac were not included in the respondent pool. Additionally, the study was conducted from January to March 2023, during second semester of the 2022-2-23 school year, and only those students enrolled during this period were considered as respondents.

Significance of the Study

The researcher believed that the findings of the study would be advantageous to the following groups:

For the School/HEI's Administration: The study's results could serve as a foundation for implementing disciplinary policies within the criminology program.

To the Deans of the College of Criminology Department that offers the BS Criminology program. Findings of the study may assist them in making decisions with regard to school discipline.

Educators in the field of Criminology. They may utilize the findings of the study by implementing and incorporating school discipline in their daily tasks which may improve the behavior of students.

The students of criminology program who are the recipients of this study. They will benefit from its results as they will be guaranteed to receive appropriate and beneficial school disciplinary policies.

For other researchers. The study's findings and recommendations could be utilized to develop similar research projects.

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2. RESEARCH METHOD

Research Simulacrum

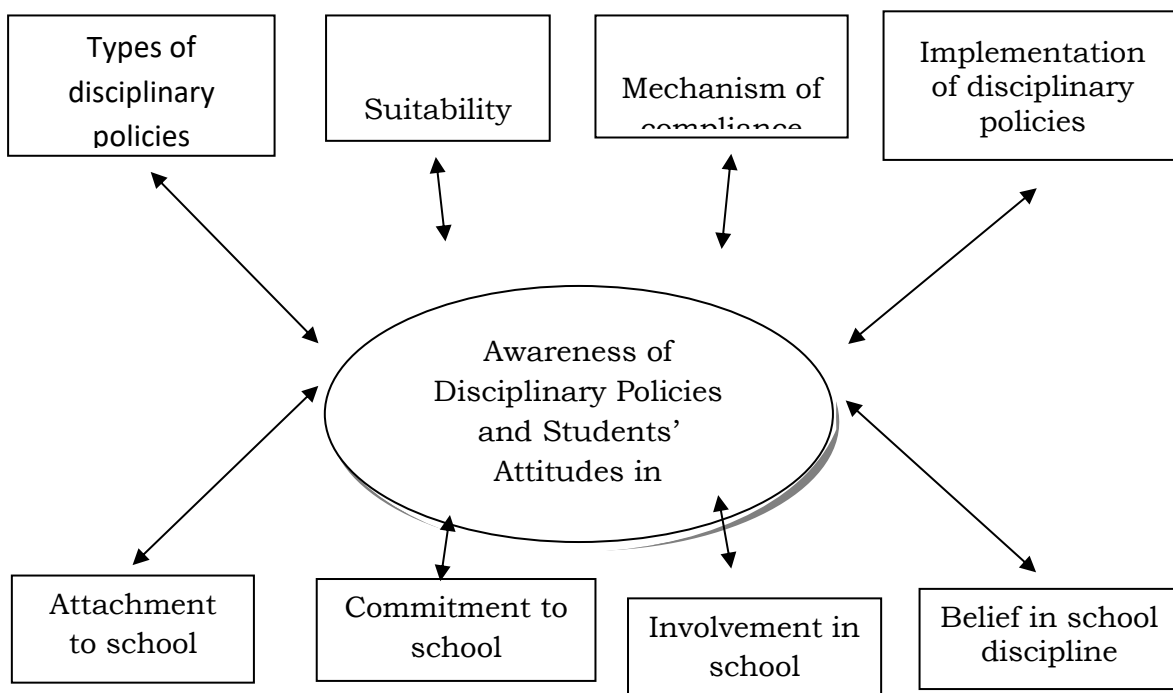


Figure 1. Simulacrum of the Study

Research Design:

The study employed a descriptive-evaluative research design to analyze the respondents' profiles. It also utilized a descriptive-comparative design to identify significant differences in respondents' awareness and attitudes. Additionally, a descriptive-correlation design was used to determine the significant relationship between awareness of disciplinary policies and students' attitudes towards the schools in Colleges of Criminology.

Research Locale:

The study was carried out in six higher education institutions (HEIs) in the province of Tarlac that offer the Bachelor of Science in Criminology program. These six HEIs include one state university and five private colleges.

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Population and Sampling Technique:

A total of 473 students from the College of Criminology, representing the six higher education institutions in the province of Tarlac, participated in the study. The sample size of 473 students was determined using Cochran's formula with 99% confidence level and 5% margin of error. Students from each institution were selected through a simple random sampling technique, ensuring every member of the population had an equal chance of being chosen. The sample size from each institution was calculated proportionally to its population using the second part of Cochran's formula.

For example, in Tarlac State University

Sample size (SS)

$$n = \frac{\text{total population (TP)} \times \text{school population (SP)}}{\text{total population (TP)}}$$

For example, in Tarlac State University:

$$473 \text{ (SS)} / 1,634 \text{ (TP)} \times 465 \text{ (SP)} = 135$$

$$0.2895 \times 465 = 134.6$$

$$\text{Rounded off} = 135$$

The distribution of students from the College of Criminology in each of the six HEIs in the province of Tarlac excluded other courses or departments. Participants were chosen by dividing the students into four groups, from first year to fourth-year levels, as shown in the table below.

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Table 1. Population and Sample Size

HEIS in the province of Tarlac Offering the BS Criminology Program	Total Student Population	Computed Sample Size
HIE-1	465	135
HIE-2	213	64
HIE-3	200	58
HIE-4	366	106
HIE-5	150	44
HIE-6	240	65
Total Population form the six (6) HEI's	1,634	473

Research Instrument

A self-prepared survey questionnaire, based on reviewed literature, was used as the primary data-gathering tool for this study. External experts validated the questionnaire for content and structure. It comprised three sections: the first section collected information on students' profiles, including age, gender, and year level; the second section assessed students' awareness of disciplinary policies, covering types of policies, their suitability, compliance mechanisms, and policy administration; the third section evaluated students' attitudes towards their school, focusing on attachment, commitment, involvement in activities, and beliefs about school discipline.

Validation of Research Instrument

The survey instrument underwent validation using both content and statistical validation strategies, following approval and recommendations from the research adviser. Content validation involved thorough evaluation techniques with the guidance of an expert validator in the relevant field of study. Initially, the research instrument, especially the survey questionnaire, was presented to the research adviser for feedback. Adjustments to the questionnaire content were made based on recommendations from both the adviser and the external validator.

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To assess internal consistency (reliability), a pilot test involving 15 test-respondents, who were not part of the study's main sample, was conducted. Cochran's alpha was employed to measure the instrument's reliability, and as demonstrated good reliability, the survey questionnaire was then distributed to the research participants.

Ethical Consideration

The conduct of this research paper adhered to legal and ethical principles aimed at ensuring the welfare of all study participants. Permission was obtained to proceed with the study to prevent any potential obstacles throughout the process. The researcher strictly adhered to research ethics to ensure the construction of an ethical research study.

The researcher made sure that all participants were fully briefed on the study and its objectives. Participants were informed that their involvement was voluntary, and they had the option to withdraw or decline participation at any time. After informing the participants about the study, each participant received an informed consent outlining the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved. Once the participants signed the informed consent form, the survey began.

The researcher explained thoroughly to the participants the guidelines and instructions in responding to the survey instrument. All items and criteria in the survey instrument were elucidated to the participants before answering.

Further, the researcher maintained the confidentiality of the names of the people and were not named in the study.

All personal information was handled with the highest level of confidentiality. All data entrusted to the researcher was strictly safeguarded and used solely for the study's purposes. In addition, proper citation and acknowledgment of authors and sources followed the guidelines of the American Psychological Association (APA), ensuring no plagiarism occurred in the research study. Finally, the research project received approval from the Institutional Ethics Review Committee of Our Lady of Fatima University (OLFU-IERC), ensuring comprehensive ethical oversight and participant protection.

Data Gathering Procedure

After completing all necessary ethics procedures and receiving approval from the Institutional Ethics Committee (IERC) to proceed, the researcher promptly submitted letters to each Higher Education Institution's college dean seeking permission to conduct the study. Data collection was facilitated using Google Forms. The researcher provided comprehensive explanations of the questionnaire and consent form to participants before inviting them to participate at their convenience.

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While awaiting responses from each participant, the researcher sought a qualified statistician. Upon receiving the gathered data, they were promptly forwarded to the statistician for analysis. After receiving the results from the statistician, the researcher meticulously reviewed the details, printed findings, and had several face-to-face meetings with his advisor at Valenzuela South Campus. The guidance of the professor was sought during these discussions. Subsequently, the researcher promptly addressed and incorporated the comments received into the final version of the study.

Statistical Treatment

The collected data was carefully documented and underwent rigorous analysis. Statistical methods guided the interpretation, including percentage calculation, weighted mean, one-way ANOVA and Pearson's test. Percentage calculation was utilized to determine respondent profiles such as age, gender, and year level. This method was employed to present data in Parts 11 and 111 of the survey, Awareness of students regarding disciplinary policies in the College of Criminology, and Students' Attitude Towards the School.

The formula used was:

$$p = \frac{f}{N} \times 100$$

where:

- **P** = Percentage
- **f** = frequency of each variable
- **N** = total number of populations

Weighted Mean: This was utilized to assess the level of students; awareness of disciplinary policies in the College of Criminology and to evaluate their attitudes towards the school.

The formula applied was:

$$fx = (f) (x)$$

where: fx = weighted mean

f= frequency

x=scale

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$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$$

The formula for an average weighted mean is as follows:

Where: \bar{x} = average weighted mean

F = frequency

f

$\sum f$ = total number of respondents

$\sum fx$ = summation of weighted mean

Verbal Interpretation of the Scale Used for Part II of the Survey

Table 2. Scale and Interpretation for Level of Awareness

Weight	Mean Range	Adjectival Rating	Interpretation
4	3.51 -4.50	Very much Aware	Students are highly aware of the disciplinary policies
3	2.51 -3.50	Aware	Most students are aware of the disciplinary policies
2	1.5 – 2.50	Least Aware	Some students have little awareness on the disciplinary policies;
1	1.0 – 1.50	Not Aware	No student is aware of the disciplinary policies.

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Verbal Interpretation of the Scale Used for Part III of the Survey

Table 3. Scale and Interpretation for Students' Attitude

Weight	Mean Range	Adjectival Range	Interpretation
4	3.51 – 4.50	Always	Applied every time
3	2.51 – 3.50	Often	Applied most of the time
2	1.5 – 2.50	Sometimes	Applied rarely
1	1.0 – 1.50	Never	Never applied

One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). This was utilized to assess the significant relationship between the dependent and independent variables. In the study, this was used to assess the significance between the demographic profile of the students (age, gender, and year level) and their level of awareness in disciplinary policies and their attitudes towards school.

The formula applied was:

$$SST = \sum_{i=1}^k \sum_{j=1}^{n_i} (X_{ij} - \bar{X})^2$$

where:

- **k** is the number of groups.
- **n_i** is the number of observations in group *i*.
- **X_{ij}** is the *j*-th observation in group *i*.
- **X̄** is the overall mean.

Between-Group Sum of Squares (SSB):

$$SSB = \sum_{i=1}^k n_i (\bar{x}_i - \bar{x}_{..})^2$$

Were \bar{x}_i is the mean group *i*.

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Within-Group Sum of Squares (SSW)

$$SSB = \sum_i^k = 1^2 \sum_j^m = 1(X_{ij} - \bar{x}_i \cdot)^2$$

Degrees of Freedom:

- Total degrees of freedom (**df total**): **N-1**, where **N** is the total number of observations.
- Between-group degrees of freedom (**df between**): **k-1**, where **k** is the number of groups.
- Within-group degrees of freedom (**df within**): **N-K**

Means Squares:

- Mean Square Between (**MSB**): $\frac{SSB}{df \text{ between}}$
- Mean Square Within (**MSW**): $\frac{SSW}{df \text{ within}}$

F-statistic: $F = \frac{MSB}{MSW}$

The F-statistic is then compared to a critical value from the F-distribution to determine if the differences between group means are statistically significant.

Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r): This coefficient was used to evaluate the relationship between respondents; awareness of disciplinary policies and their attitudes towards the school

The formula used was:

$$r = \frac{n\sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)^2}{\sqrt{[n\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][n\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

The interpretation used was:

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Table 4. Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) Value

Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) value	Strength	Direction
Greater than .5	Strong	Positive
Between .3 and .5	Moderate	Positive
Between 0 and .3	Weak	Positive
0	None	None
Between 0 and -.3	Weak	Negative
Between -.3 and -.5	Moderate	Negative
Less than -.5	Strong	Negative

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION (10 PT)

Presentation, Analysis, and Interpretation of Data

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the data collected in this study using the methodology, designs and tools mentioned in the preceding chapter.

Table 5 presents the profile of the respondents enrolled in the second semester of the school year 2022-2023 from the six (6) Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in province of Tarlac that offer a Bachelor of Science in Criminology program. The gathered data revealed that most of the study's respondents were 18-20 years old. In addition to that, it was presented that most of the respondents were male. Moreover, first-year college students dominated the studies in number.

The study of Adekeye, O., et al. (2017) revealed that when students were required about the presence of significant disciplinary issues in their school, 91% affirmed the existence of such problems. Additionally, 89% of the respondents acknowledged the presence of individuals addressing discipline issues within the school.

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Table 5. Profile of the Respondents

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
18-20	325	69%
21-23	140	29%
24-39+	8	2%
Gender		
Male	283	60%
Female	190	40%
Year level		
First year	257	54%
Second year	139	29%
Third year	44	9%
Fourth year	43	9%

Table 6 presents the profiles of the six HEIs in the province of Tarlac offering criminology program. The data reveals that most students were enrolled at HEI-4 with 1,028 respondents, followed by HEI-1 with 1,023 students. HEI-2 has the longest history, existing for at least 22 years. Regarding faculty and accreditation status, HEI-1 has full-time teachers, a few part-timers, and is the only accredited school among the six HEIs.

Table 6 supports the findings of Lozano, R., et al., (2022), which reported a survey examining the teaching of sustainability competencies in 13 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). These institutions were selected based on their voluntary participation in the research.

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World Education Connect

Multidisciplinary e-Publication

Volume IV, Issue VII (July 2024), p.39-72 International

ISSN (Online) 2799-0842 / ISSN (Print) 2799-130X

Published Online at www.pinagpalapublishing.com

Publisher: Pinagpala Publishing Services

DTI Reg. No. 303443 / TIN 293-150-678/ Bus. Permit No. 8183

National Book Development Board (NBDB) Reg. No. 3269

Table 6. Profile of the Higher Education Institutions (HEI's)

Higher Education Institutions (HEI's)	Enrollment Size S.Y 2022-2023	Number of Years of Existence	Number of Faculty Members		Accreditation Status
			Full Time	Part Time	
HEI-1	1,023	11	11	4	Level 3
HEI-2	803	22	8	14	None
HEI-3	540	13	4	6	None
HEI-4	1,028	7	7	28	None
HEI-5	525	14	4	5	None
HEI-6	910	12	9	5	None

Table 7 indicates that among the disciplinary policies evaluated, five rules have an average awareness score of 3.4, which falls under the category of "aware". These rules relate to various aspects of student behavior and institutional practices within the College of Criminology. The specific rules are as follows:

1. The school implements policies on non-violation of orders of the college (3.4-Aware): This rule suggests that there is a moderate level of awareness among students regarding policies related to the non-violation of the college's orders. A closer examination of the students' attitudes and understanding of the policy, as well as their compliance, could provide insights into the effectiveness of enforcing and communicating such regulations.
2. The school implements policies on non-commission of crimes (3.4-Aware): Similarly, the awareness rating of 3.4 indicates a moderate level of understanding among students regarding policies related to the prevention of criminal activities. A comprehensive study could explore students' perspectives on how well they comprehend and adhere to these policies and whether there are areas for improvement.
3. The department implements policies on weekly monitoring of student activities (3.4-Aware): This rule also suggests a moderate level of awareness. Investigating the students' perception on this monitoring process, its impact on their behavior, and any potential areas for enhancement could be valuable.
4. The department designates a person in-charge for daily inspection (3.4-Aware): The average awareness rating of 3.4 indicates that students are moderately aware of the daily in-charge designated for inspection by the department. A study could delve into students'

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National Book Development Board (NBDB) Reg. No. 3269

experiences with this inspection process, their attitudes towards it, and whether they believe it contributes to maintaining a disciplined environment.

5. The school assigned a faculty adviser to each student section and year level (3.4): The awareness rating of 3.4 implies a moderate level of awareness regarding the said rule. Exploring students' interactions with their advisers, the effectiveness of the support system in addressing disciplinary concerns, and any suggested improvements could be key focal points.

By focusing on these rules with a 3.4 average awareness level, a targeted study can provide valuable insights into the students' attitudes, perceptions, and adherence to specific disciplinary policies within the College of Criminology. Additionally, a corroborative study could involve interviews, surveys, and observations to enrich the understanding of how these policies influence the overall disciplinary climate among criminology students.

The statement above is well supported by the discussion of Babasa, J., & Balog, M. (2019) where they stated that when employing the Awareness Scale for school Rules and Regulations it was found in their study that a significant portion of the participants were conscious of and regularly followed the established set school rules and regulations with ETTMNHHS.

Table 7. Student's Awareness Regarding the Disciplinary

Policies in the College of Criminology

Types of Disciplinary Policies	W.M	Interpretation
The school implements policies on class attendance	3.6	very much aware
There are policies on classroom and campus behavior	3.6	very much aware
The school implements policies on proper wearing of uniform.	3.6	very much aware
The school implements policies on non-violation of orders of college.	3.4	aware
The school implements policies on non-commission of crimes.	3.4	aware
The school implements policies that are appropriate to develop discipline among all students in the College of Criminal Justice	3.6	very much aware

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The implemented disciplinary policies help prevent the occurrence of misbehavior among all students.	3.6	very much aware
The implemented policies create an opportunity for all concerned to bring attention to the existing performance, conduct or violation issue.	3.5	very much aware
The implemented policies are supplemented with appropriate procedures for the handling of complaints and necessary actions.	3.5	very much aware
The implemented policies are applicable to all students and do not violate or disregard any rights or privilege of the students.	3.5	very much aware
The department implements policies on weekly monitoring of student activities.	3.4	aware
The department designates a person in-charge for daily inspection.	3.4	aware
The school implements policies on proper student orientations.	3.5	very much aware
The school implements student election for student leader.	3.5	very much aware
The school assigns a faculty adviser to each student section and year level.	3.4	aware
The school has the appropriate department or office and personnel (e.g., Guidance Office, Office of Student Affairs, Office of Student Discipline, etc) that implements the disciplinary policies of the school.	3.5	Very much aware
The school ensures that all concerned individuals regarding disciplinary cases are properly and timely informed.	3.5	Very much aware
The school ensures the imposition of appropriate sanctions on violations committed by the students.	3.5	Very much aware
The school coordinates with the proper authorities or agencies regarding student discipline whenever necessary.	3.5	Very much aware
The school ensures the confidentiality of records of	3.5	Very much aware

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student disciplinary cases.

Average 3.5 Very Much Aware

Table 8 contains statements describing the students' attitudes towards the school regarding their attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief in their school discipline. The weighted mean gathered from the 473 respondents in each statement ranges from 3.2 to 3.7, which is interpreted as either "always" or "often". This result was analyzed as a positive outcome for the students' attitude who participated in the study. This data also mean that the statements that describe their attitude towards their school attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief in school discipline were always applied. The overall scores garnered an average mean of 3.5 which is interpreted as "always applied". Almost all statements describing the students' attitude reflect a positive outcome.

Results from the School Rules and Regulations Awareness Scale (SRRAS) indicated that most participants were cognizant of adhering to various rules. These include wearing a complete uniform and carrying an identification card, appropriately segregating waste, retaining their personal identification card, upholding environmental cleanliness, arriving at school punctually, and using technology and water supply in a responsible manner (Babasa, J., & Balog, M. (2019).

Table 8. Students' Attitude Towards the School

Indicators	W.M	Interpretation
Attachment to school		
I have chosen the right school for myself.	3.5	Always
I sense like I am part of the school.	3.5	Always
I ask advice from my teachers.	3.2	Often
I sense happy when I am in school.	3.4	Always
I get along with everybody in school.	3.4	Always
Commitment to school		
I am proud of my school.	3.6	Always
I obey school rules and regulations.	3.6	Always
I study hard to get high grades.	3.6	Always

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Volume IV, Issue VII (July 2024), p.39-72 International
ISSN (Online) 2799-0842 / ISSN (Print) 2799-130X
 Published Online at www.pinagpalapublishing.com
 Publisher: Pinagpala Publishing Services
 DTI Reg. No. 303443 / TIN 293-150-678/ Bus. Permit No. 8183
National Book Development Board (NBDB) Reg. No. 3269

I will graduate from this school.	3.7	Always
I will continue my education once I graduate by attending graduate studies from this school.	3.6	Always
Involvement in school activities		
I attend school academic activities.	3.6	Always
I participate in extra-curricular activities.	3.4	Often
I participate in group class activities.	3.6	Always
I volunteer to perform in school activities.	3.2	Often
I help other students during school activities.	3.5	Always
Belief on school discipline		
The school policies are fair.	3.5	Always
All students are treated fairly by teachers and staff.	3.4	Often
Punishments for breaking rules are the same for all students.	3.5	Always
School policies exist to protect students.	3.6	Always
Students of different gender and races are treated equally in this school.	3.6	Always
Average	3.5	Always

Table 9 illustrates the variations in respondents' demographic profiles-especially age, gender, and year level-in relation to their level of awareness of the disciplinary policies.

The null hypothesis, "There is no significant difference between the respondents' demographic profile and their level of awareness on disciplinary policy," was tested using the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) tool.

When age is correlated with the level of awareness on the disciplinary policy of the respondents, the f-value is 1.106 when the degree of freedom is 33 at 0.05 level of significance with a probability value of 0.317. This result allows the researcher to accept the

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null hypothesis. This result implied that the age of the respondents had no bearing on their level of awareness on the disciplinary policy.

When gender is correlated with the level of awareness on the disciplinary policy of the respondents, the f-value is 1.502 when the degree of freedom is 33 at 0.05 level of significance with a probability value of 0.038. This result allows the researchers to reject the null hypothesis. This result implied that the gender of the respondents had a bearing on their level of awareness of the disciplinary policy.

When the year level is correlated with the level of awareness on the disciplinary policy of the respondents, the f-value is .882 when the degree of freedom is 33 at 0.05 level of significance with a probability value of 0.660. This result allows the researchers to accept the null hypothesis. This result implied that the year level of the respondents had no bearing on their level of awareness on the disciplinary policy.

Significant Difference Between the Respondents' Profile and Attitude Towards School

A percentage of Latino and Latina students exhibited a significant and negative correlation with the presence of probation (b=2.508, p=.046) and privilege loss (b=21.435, p=.022). Conversely, there is a significant and positive correlation between the percentage of Latino and Latina students and the incidence of out-of-school suspensions (b=.242, p=.032) (Welch, K., & Payne, A. A. (2018).

Table 9. Significant Difference Between the Respondents' Profile and Level of Awareness on Disciplinary Policy

Demographic profile	F-value	DF	P-value	Decision	Interpretation
Age	1.106	33	.317	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Gender	1.502	33	.038	Reject Ho	Significant
Year level	.882	33	.660	Accept Ho	Not Significant

Table 10 shows the difference between the respondents' demographic profile, specifically their age, gender, and year level, and their attitude towards school.

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The null hypothesis, "There is no significant difference between the respondents' demographic profile and their attitude towards school" was tested using the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) tool.

When age is correlated with the respondents' attitude towards the school, the f-value is 1.129 when the degree of freedom is 34 at 0.05 level of significance with probability value of 0.286. This result allows the researchers to accept the null hypothesis. This result implied that the age of the respondents had no bearing to their attitude towards school.

When gender is correlated with the respondents' attitude towards the school, the f-value is 1.150 when the degree of freedom is 34 at 0.05 level of significance with probability value of 0.260. This result allows the researchers to accept the null hypothesis. This result implied that the gender of the respondents had no bearing to their attitude towards school.

When the year level is correlated with the respondents' attitude towards the school, the f-value is 1.088 when the degree of freedom is 34 at 0.05 level of significance with probability value of 0.340. This result allows the researchers to accept the null hypothesis. This result implied that the year level of the respondents had no bearing to their attitude towards school.

Fekadu, A. A. (2019) stated that the awareness of school rules and regulations is evident in Table 3, where the chi-square value concerning student's awareness of these rules and their perception of promoting good behavior is 5.96 (p-value 0.015). This indicates a significant correlation between students' awareness of school rules and regulations and their perceptions of promoting positive behavior, with a significance level of 5%.

Table 10. Significant Difference Between the Respondents' Profile and Attitude Towards School

Demographic Profile	f-value	Df	P-value	Decision	Interpretation
Age	1.129	34	.286	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Gender	1.150	34	.260	Accept Ho	Significant
Year Level	1.088	34	.340	Accept Ho	Not Significant

Table 11 shows the relationship between the respondents' awareness of disciplinary policy and their attitude towards school. The relationship between the two constructs was discovered to be statistically significant ($r=.591$, $p=.000$). The correlation coefficient indicates a moderate positive relationship between the awareness of disciplinary policy and attitude

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towards school. This result indicates a direct proportion between the two constructs being studied. When the awareness of disciplinary policy is high, their attitude towards the school is also high, and vice versa.

In Fekuda, A. A.'s (2019) study on attitudes towards school rules and regulations, the chi-square and p-values for students' attitudes and their perceptions of promoting good behavior were 6.25 and 0.012, respectively. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant association between students' attitudes towards school rules and regulations and their perceptions of fostering positive behavior at a 5% significance level.

Table 11. Relationship of the Respondents' Level of Awareness on Disciplinary Policy and Attitude Towards School

Variables	Level of Awareness on Disciplinary Policy				
	Statistical Test	Statistical Test Value	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Attitude Towards School	Pearson R Correlation	0.591	.000	Reject Ho	Significant

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4. CONCLUSION

Summary of Findings

The majority of respondents were aged 18-20, predominantly male, and primarily first-year college students. Table 6 provides details about the profile of the six HEIs, indicating varying student enrollments, with HEI1 as the only institution among the six with accreditation.

There are five disciplinary policies within the College of Criminology that are highlighted, each with an average awareness rating of 3.4. These rules cover areas such as non-violation of college orders, non-commission of crime, weekly monitoring of student's activities, designation of a person in-charge for daily inspection, and assignment of faculty advisers. A moderate level of awareness is observed for each policy.

Regarding students' attitudes towards school attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief in school discipline, the overall positive results are reflected in the weighted mean scores ranging from 3.2 to 3.7, indicating these aspects are commonly applied.

ANOVA was used to examine the relationship between respondents; demographic profiles (age, gender, and year level) and their awareness of disciplinary policies. While age and year level did not show a significant correlation, gender displayed a notable relationship.

On the correlation between the respondents' demographic profiles and their attitude towards school, the study revealed no significant differences based on age, gender, or year level. Table 11 establishes a statistically significant relationship ($r=.591$, $p=.000$) between respondents' awareness of disciplinary policy and their attitude towards school, indicating a moderate positive correlation. Higher awareness of disciplinary policies corresponds to a more positive attitude toward the school.

The study provides a comprehensive analysis of respondents' profiles, institutional data, disciplinary policies, students' attitudes, and statistical correlations, contributing valuable insights to the understanding of factors influencing the educational environment in the College of Criminology.

Conclusions

Maintaining student discipline is crucial for creating an optimal learning environment that not only enhances academic knowledge and skills within the classroom but also fosters personal growth and sense of belonging on campus. This is particularly significant for criminology students, who are future law enforcers expected to embody discipline as core aspects of their behavior and training. As aspiring law enforcement officers, they hold high standards of student discipline.

However, recognizing that these students are still in the development phase, it is essential for them to be aware of potential gaps in their understanding and practice of responsibility and discipline. This study assessed students' awareness of disciplinary policies within the College of Criminology departments across various institutions in the Province of Tarlac. It also evaluated their attitudes towards the school, including their commitment, involvement,

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belief, and attachment. This research aims to contribute to the students' progression and development into responsible law enforcers in the future.

Data collected from 473 students across different schools revealed that most participants were male, age 18-20, and primarily in their first year. Evaluating the study participants, who represented the entire student body enrolled in the College of Criminology programs across the Province of Tarlac, showed a high level of awareness regarding disciplinary policies, with an average mean score of 3.5. This positive outcome is mirrored in the assessment of students' attitudes towards school attachment, involvement, commitment, and belief in disciplinary policies, also averaging 3.5, indicating consistent compliance, participation, dedication, acceptance, and trust in school activities and policies.

Using descriptive correlational statistics, including ANOVA and Pearson's R test, the study found that age and year level did not significantly correlate with students' awareness of disciplinary policies. However, gender emerged as a significant factor influencing students' awareness levels. This finding parallels the relationship observed between students' attitudes and their demographic profiles, indicating that while age and year level do not vary significantly, gender does.

Furthermore, the study concluded that students' level of awareness of disciplinary policies correlates moderately positively with their attitudes towards school. This suggests that higher awareness may lead to negative attitudes towards school. Given these positive findings, the researcher strongly recommends maintaining efforts to enhance student awareness and discipline. Such outcomes could inspire institutions beyond Tarlac to prioritize awareness and discipline among their students.

Recommendations:

The current study explores students' awareness of disciplinary in their institution and assesses their attitudes towards the school accordingly. However, the study's findings should be interpreted cautiously due to its inherent limitations that may impact the outcomes.

Given the study's revelation of high awareness and positive attitudes among participants, the researcher recommends that school administrators collaborate with faculty, staff, and parents to continue fostering students' holistic development. This approach aims to cultivate responsible and disciplined citizens for the future.

Furthermore, future researchers could enhance this study by incorporating assessments of students' compliance with disciplinary policies and including qualitative evidence. Such additions would contribute valuable insights for future studies. It is also essential to replicate this type of research among students across various disciplines, not limited to criminology.

Specially, the researcher proposes the following Action Plan as a framework to enhance awareness of disciplinary policies and promote positive student attitudes within Criminology programs.

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Multidisciplinary e-Publication

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ISSN (Online) 2799-0842 / ISSN (Print) 2799-130X

Published Online at www.pinagpalapublishing.com

Publisher: Pinagpala Publishing Services

DTI Reg. No. 303443 / TIN 293-150-678/ Bus. Permit No. 8183

National Book Development Board (NBDB) Reg. No. 3269

Action Plan: Enhancing Awareness of Disciplinary Policies and Promoting Positive Student Attitudes Among Criminology Students.

Table 12. Proposed Action Plan

Activities'	Objectives	Person's Involved	Resources	Time Frame	Perform ance
Consistently conduct Criminology program orientation and workshops.	Introduce a segment about disciplinary policies during the orientation program for new students. Arrange workshop and seminars periodically throughout the academic year.	Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA), Dean, Faculty, Students Leaders All Criminology sStudents, Security Personnel and Guidance Officer	Orientation Program Coordinator. Workshop Facilitators Venue and Presentation Materials	2 Weeks prior to each Semester for Orientation and Monthly for Workshop	Always
Develop a comprehensive communication strategy.	Establish a dedicated webpage or section on the college's website. Utilize social media platforms to disseminate important messages and	Managem ent Information System Office (MISO) Administrati on	Web developer/pr ogrammer Social media accounts	1 month On-going	Always

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Published Online at www.pinagpalapublishing.com

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success stories.

Send regular emails or newsletters.

Email marketing software

Monthly

Foster a culture of integrity and professionalism

Arrange events and activities to commend outstanding behavior.

From student organizations or clubs dedicated to ethical conduct.

Encourage faculty to intergrate discussions on disciplinary policies into the Criminology program.

Event coordinator, Dean, Faculty Members, Student leaders, and All criminology students and Guidance officer

College cultural coordinator, faculty, and students' organizations

Quarterly

Always

On-going

Throughout the academic year

Consistently Inspection of Criminology Attire

Consistently hold sessions to uphold the distinctive characteristics of each year level.

Disciplinary officer, faculty/adviser, and student leaders

College

Weekly

Always

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Publisher: Pinagpala Publishing Services

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, the researcher would like to express his deepest and heartfelt appreciation to the Almighty God for granting him strength, guidance, and blessing throughout this journey. The divine presence has been his constant source of inspiration and hope.

Secondly, the researcher extends his sincerest thanks to the hardworking and energetic Graduate School Dean, Dr. Heracleo D. Lagrada, Chairwoman Evaluator Dr. Leia Grace Elaine U. Unarce, and Members, Dr. Cecille Mae C. Canilon, and Dr. Adrian Bon B. Santiago for their unwavering support and for providing him with the opportunity to pursue his master's degree. Their vision and commitment to academic excellence have been instrumental in shaping the researcher's scholarly pursuits.

Furthermore, the researcher is profoundly grateful to his esteemed professors, namely, Dr. Rodehlia L. Macaspac, Dr. Josefina C. Mendoza, Ms. Mor David and to his thesis adviser Dr. John B. David, their expertise and invaluable guidance have been pivotal in shaping the direction of his research. Their unwavering belief in his abilities and their tireless efforts in mentoring have played a significant role in the successful completion of this thesis.

Moreover, the researcher also extends his gratitude to his dear colleagues, a former dean, Atty. Theodore M. Timpac, a current dean, Dr. Roel R. Alviar, Dr. Jayson R. Felix, Dr. Ramil M. Las-igan, Mam Lian Carla C. Luzong, Ms Marie Fe F. Buscayno, Atty. Luisito L. Pasigon, Ms. Jelly Ann V. Mercado, Ms. Girlie L. Baustita, Mr. Jairus C. Soriano, Mr. Arturo V. Panzo, Mrs. Mary Jane P. Laurzano, Dr. Wilfredo Domingo and his friend Mr. Jan Vincent Carmen. The researcher is grateful for the stimulating discussions, collaborative spirit, and camaraderie they have shared. Their insights and constructive feedback have greatly enriched and contributed to this paper's overall quality. The researcher cherishes the memories they have created together and the support that they have extended. The researcher would also like to express his most profound appreciation to his loving wife, Gemma B. Bicoy, to his sons Franz Geo and Jirou B. Bicoy for their unwavering love, encouragement, and understanding. Their constant support, patience, and belief in him have been his pillars of strength throughout this challenging journey. Their presence in his life has constantly reminded the researcher of what truly matters.

Lastly, the researcher acknowledges the countless individuals who may not be named here but have played a significant role in his academic and personal growth. Their guidance, encouragement, and support have been invaluable in shaping who the researcher is today. The researcher offers his heartfelt thanks to all those who have contributed in different ways, big and small. This accomplishment would not have been possible without every one of you. May our collective efforts inspire and empower others in their academic endeavors.

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WORLD EDUCATION CONNECT

World Education Connect Multidisciplinary e-Publication

Volume IV, Issue VII (July 2024), p.39-72 International
ISSN (Online) 2799-0842 / ISSN (Print) 2799-130X
Published Online at www.pinagpalapublishing.com
Publisher: Pinagpala Publishing Services
DTI Reg. No. 303443 / TIN 293-150-678/ Bus. Permit No. 8183
National Book Development Board (NBDB) Reg. No. 3269

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Volume IV, Issue VII (July 2024), p.39-72 International
ISSN (Online) 2799-0842 / ISSN (Print) 2799-130X

Published Online at www.pinagpalapublishing.com

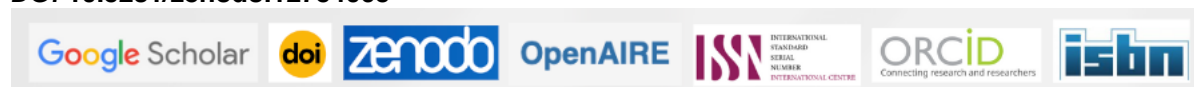
Publisher: Pinagpala Publishing Services

DTI Reg. No. 303443 / TIN 293-150-678/ Bus. Permit No. 8183

National Book Development Board (NBDB) Reg. No. 3269

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DOI 10.5281/zenodo.12754065



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