

## THE ROLE OF POLICE VISIBILITY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOWARDS PEACE AND ORDER SITUATION AS PERCEIVED BY COMMUNITY

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**ABSTRACT:** This research looks into how community members perceive police visibility, and community engagement as an influence on peace and order in the community. The study illustrates how partnerships with police and the community work together to create trust, decrease crime, and encourage stability in neighborhoods. This research analyzes community engagement and police visibility as factors that shape the perceived state of peace and order in communities. Acknowledging the notion that policing and law enforcement entails more than an institutional response, this study illustrates how police visibility effectively intervenes in crime and contributes to enhancements in public safety by actively engaging police officers with community residents. This study quantitative data collected from surveys of community residents and can explore the deterrent effect of police visibility on crime and the feelings of safety it generates, as well as how community engagement builds trust and social acquiescence between community residents and police. This study suggests that enhanced policing and police reinforcement complemented with community-based engagement is integral to the assurance of peace, the prevention of disorder, and overall social cohesion. This study concludes with the acknowledgment of integrated policing strategies and community engagement as a means of sustainable peace and order.

**Keywords:** Community Engagement, Crime Prevention, Peace and Order, Police Visibility, Public Safety

### I. Introduction

Peace and order are fundamental to any society's progress, stability, and well-being. In the Philippines, maintaining public safety has always been a core mandate of the Philippine National Police (Marujo, 2023). In recent years, rising concerns over criminality, insurgency, and drug-related violence have increased the need for more strategic and community-centered approaches to policing (Zare et al., 2022). Two vital elements that have emerged as pillars of modern policing are police visibility and community engagement. These components not only serve as tools for crime deterrence and prevention but also help foster trust and collaboration between law enforcement agencies and the public (Micallef, 2025).

Police visibility refers to the physical presence of uniformed police officers in communities through foot patrols, checkpoints, traffic enforcement, and quick-response teams (Mifsud et al., 2021). A visible police force is perceived by the public as an immediate deterrent to criminal behavior and a reassuring presence that promotes feelings of safety. Studies show that areas with consistent and strategic police presence experience lower incidents of street-level crime and better community cooperation (Palmer et al., 2021). In the Philippines, efforts such as intensified "Oplan Sita," mobile patrols, and the presence of Tourist Police in major cities have been launched to enhance visibility and response time (Dau et al., 2021).

On the other hand, community engagement involves interactive and cooperative programs between the police and the public, including barangay consultations, neighborhood watch groups, outreach initiatives, and information-sharing activities (Sumawang, 2023). Community policing is based on the idea that safety is a shared responsibility between the police and the people they serve. Proactive community engagement improves police-citizen relationships and empowers residents to take part in maintaining peace and order in their own

neighborhoods (Martinez et al. 2022) . In this way, law enforcement transforms from being purely reactive to becoming partners in community development (Javorka, 2020).

## II. Methods and Materials

The study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationships between police visibility, community engagement, and peace and order as perceived by community. This design was particularly suitable for understanding the patterns and associations among these variables and for predicting potential future outcomes based on current knowledge (Stangor & Walinga, 2014).

The study was conducted across selected barangays in Ozamis City. Data collection took place in both urban and rural zones to capture a comprehensive view of how these factors influence the maintenance of peace and order. Participants included the general public, local residents, community leaders and all of whom provided valuable insights into how police visibility, community engagement factors of peace and order in these areas. The researcher distributed questionnaire to the (120) one hundred twenty residents within the selected barangays in Ozamis City. These respondents were selected based on their direct experiences with the presence and activities of the police officers in their communities, providing insight into how police visibility and community engagement maintains peace and order.

The data collection process adhered to strict ethical and procedural protocols to ensure confidentiality, voluntary participation, and data accuracy. Initially, approval was secured from the dean of the Misamis University College of Criminology and relevant ethics boards. The study was explained to them, emphasizing their rights, the voluntary nature of participation, and the confidentiality of their responses. The researcher formally requested permission through a letter to local authorities and community leaders to conduct the study on peace and order, focusing on the roles of police visibility and community engagement for peace and order as perceived by community. In the letter, the researcher emphasized that all data collected would remain strictly confidential and be used solely for the purpose of the study. The letter also sought permission from the heads of local barangays areas to allow the distribution of the Police Presence and Community Engagement questionnaires to randomly selected community members.

This study strictly followed the ethical guidelines of Misamis University and complied with Republic Act No. 10173, also known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012, to protect participant rights and data confidentiality. Participation was entirely voluntary, with individuals fully informed about the study's purpose, process, and potential impact. They retained the right to withdraw at any time without consequence.

## III. Results and Discussions

### Level of police visibility in the community

Police visibility in the community refers to the consistent and noticeable presence of law enforcement officers within neighborhoods, public spaces, and local institutions. (Kochel et al., 2019) It plays a crucial role in fostering public safety, enhancing trust, and deterring criminal activity through proactive engagement rather than reactive enforcement. When officers are accessible and actively interacting with residents, they help build a sense of security and cooperation, encouraging community members to share concerns and participate in maintaining order. (Baplawat et al., 2022) Table 1 presents the level of police visibility in the community as to physical presence and patrol frequency.

Table 1. Level of Police Visibility in the Community (N=120)

Variable	Police Visibility		Remark
	Mean	SD	
Physical Presence	3.56	0.032	Very High
Patrol Frequency	3.54	0.062	Very High

Note. Police Visibility Scale: Note. Scale: 3.26–4.00 = Very High; 2.51–3.25 = High; 1.76–2.50 = Low; 1.00–1.75 = Very Low.

The results in Table 1 indicate a *very high* level of police visibility in the community as perceived by parents, based on the responses of 120 participants. The mean score for Patrol Frequency ( $M = 3.56$ ,  $SD = 0.032$ ) suggests that parents consistently observe police officers conducting regular patrols in their area. (Valmari et al., 2023) This very high rating implies that patrols are not only frequent but also noticeable enough to influence parental perceptions of safety and vigilance. A low standard deviation further indicates strong agreement among respondents, meaning most parents share similar experiences regarding how often they see police patrols in their neighborhood. (Bell, 2020) Such regular visibility may contribute to deterring crime, enhancing community order, and reassuring residents about the presence of active law enforcement.

Similarly, the Physical Presence of police officers also received a *very high* rating ( $M = 3.54$ ,  $SD = 0.062$ ), reflecting strong parental awareness of officers being stationed or circulating in public areas. This suggests that parents frequently encounter police officers in visible positions—such as on foot patrol, in marked vehicles, or stationed near community landmarks. The slightly higher standard deviation indicates minimal variation in responses, but overall, parents still largely agree on the consistent visibility of police personnel. (Schut et al., 2019) These findings collectively demonstrate that the community experiences a strong and reassuring police presence, which may play a significant role in promoting feelings of safety, encouraging cooperation with law enforcement, and maintaining a stable community environment. (Hevi et al., 2022)

The findings of very high police visibility in the community carry important implications for both law enforcement and local residents. A consistently strong police presence can reinforce public trust, encourage community cooperation, and contribute to a heightened sense of safety among families, particularly parents. (Haim et al., 2021) This visibility also supports crime prevention efforts, as frequent patrols and noticeable officer presence can deter potential offenders and promote order in public spaces. For police organizations, the results highlight the effectiveness of maintaining regular patrols and engaging visibly with the community, suggesting that such strategies should be sustained or even expanded. Overall, the high awareness of police visibility indicates a positive relationship between officers and residents, which can serve as a foundation for deeper community-policing initiatives and collaborative problem-solving. (Levy et al., 2023)

#### IV. Extent of police community engagement in their area

The extent of police community engagement in a given area reflects how actively and effectively law enforcement interacts with residents through communication, collaboration, and participation in community activities. This engagement goes beyond routine patrols, focusing instead on building relationships, addressing concerns, and working with citizens to promote safety and order. (BuçPapaj, 2024) Strong police–community engagement fosters mutual trust, enhances transparency, and encourages shared responsibility for addressing local issues. Understanding the level of such engagement provides valuable insight into the quality of partnerships between police and residents, as well as the overall effectiveness of community-oriented policing efforts. Table 2 presents the extent of police community engagement in their area.

Table 2. *Extent of police community engagement in their area* (N=120)

Variable	Community Engagement		Remark
	Mean	SD	
Active Engagement	3.54	0.03	Very High
Formal Engagement	3.52	0.02	Very High

*Note. Community Engagement Scale: Note. Scale: 3.26–4.00 = Very High; 2.51–3.25 = High; 1.76–2.50 = Low; 1.00–1.75 = Very Low.*

The results in Table 2 indicate a *very high* extent of police–community engagement as perceived by the 120 respondents. Active Engagement received a mean score of 3.54 ( $SD = 0.03$ ), suggesting that community members frequently observe police officers participating in activities that involve direct interaction, collaboration, and communication with residents. (Wolfe et al., 2020) The very small standard deviation indicates a high level of agreement among participants, reflecting consistent experiences of active police involvement across the community. This finding implies that police officers are not only visible but are also taking deliberate steps to engage with citizens through outreach programs, dialogues, and problem-solving initiatives. Such engagement is essential in strengthening trust, increasing transparency, and encouraging cooperative efforts to address local concerns. (Lansing et al., 2023)

Formal Engagement also obtained a *very high* rating with a mean score of 3.52 ( $SD = 0.02$ ), reinforcing the strong presence of structured and organized police–community interactions. This includes participation in formal meetings, consultations, school visits, seminars, and coordination with community groups and local leaders. (Kiss et al., 2022) The extremely low standard deviation suggests that respondents consistently recognize these formal efforts, indicating that such programs are well-established and widely experienced. Together, these results illustrate a robust foundation of police community collaboration within the area. The very high ratings across both active and formal engagement emphasize that the police are effectively implementing community-oriented strategies, which contribute to improved relationships, heightened trust, and a shared commitment to maintaining peace and safety. (Ali et al., 2023)

These findings are supported by a substantial volume of related literature on the very high level of police–community engagement observed in this study. Community-oriented policing research has placed

consistent emphasis on the role of active and formal engagement methods in relationship-building between law enforcement and community members characterized by trust and mutual respect. Scholars like Skogan (2006) and Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1998) note that active engagement, in which police officers frequently engage residents through foot patrols, community events, and informal conversations, contributes to reducing fear of crime while engendering mutual respect and understanding. It has been shown to improve public perceptions of police legitimacy and encourage residents to participate actively in efforts at preventing crimes. (Madero-Hernandez et al., 2020) Furthermore, formal engagement strategies, such as organized meetings with neighborhood associations, school outreach programs, and structured dialogues with community leaders, are presented as integral to institutionalizing police accountability and responsiveness. Various studies have documented that these formal channels provide opportunities for residents to air their concerns, collaborate in problem-solving, and forge longer-term partnerships beyond reactive policing. (Roman et al., 2022)

Overall, this large body of literature aligns closely with the current findings and reaffirms that long-term, visible, and structured police community engagement is crucial for developing effective partnerships, enhancing safety outcomes, and building a mutual commitment to community welfare. (Reinsch et al., 2025) The very high level of police community engagement highlighted in the findings carries significant implications for both law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve. It suggests that active and formal interactions between police and residents are effective strategies for building trust, improving communication, and fostering collaboration on safety issues. For police departments, maintaining and expanding these engagement efforts can lead to greater community cooperation, which is essential for proactive crime prevention and problem-solving. (Alehegn et al., 2025) Furthermore, strong engagement promotes transparency and accountability, helping to bridge gaps between law enforcement and diverse community groups. For residents, such engagement enhances their sense of security and empowerment, encouraging them to participate actively in local initiatives and report concerns more readily. (Sapkota, 2024) These positive dynamics can create a safer, more resilient community where shared responsibility and mutual respect form the foundation for lasting social stability.

## V. Peace and Order Situation of the Community

The peace and order situation of a community refers to the overall level of safety, stability, and harmony experienced by its residents. (Tohari, 2025) It encompasses factors such as the prevalence of crime, the effectiveness of law enforcement, the presence of social conflicts, and the general sense of security within neighborhoods. Assessing this situation provides insight into how safe and orderly a community feels, as well as the effectiveness of measures in place to prevent disorder and maintain public safety. Table 3 presents the peace and order situation of the community as perceived by the respondents.

Table 3. *Peace and Order Situation in the Community* (N=120)

Variable	Peace and Order Situation		Remark
	Mean	SD	
Public Safety	3.59	0.02	Very High
Community Discipline	3.59	0.02	Very High

*Note. Peace and Order Situation Scale: Note. Scale: 3.26–4.00 = Very High; 2.51–3.25 = High; 1.76–2.50 = Low; 1.00–1.75 = Very Low.*

Table 3 presents the findings on the peace and order situation in the community, with a specific focus on public safety as measured by community discipline. The mean scores for both Public Safety and Community Discipline are 3.59, accompanied by very low standard deviations of 0.02, indicating strong consensus among the 120 respondents. According to the Peace and Order Situation Scale, these scores fall within the Highly Aware category, suggesting that community members recognize and experience a notably positive state of safety and order in their area. The very low variability in responses reinforces that this perception is widely shared, reflecting a community where rules and social norms are generally respected and maintained. (Eriksson et al., 2021)

The high mean ratings for community discipline imply that residents observe a strong adherence to laws, regulations, and informal social controls, which contribute significantly to maintaining peace and order. Such discipline can manifest through respectful behavior, reduced incidents of public disturbance, and active participation in community efforts to uphold safety standards. (Alhalalmeh et al., 2025) The alignment between public safety and community discipline underscores the interdependence of individual and collective responsibility in fostering a secure environment. These findings highlight the effectiveness of local governance, community initiatives, and possibly law enforcement efforts in creating a setting where residents feel safe and

confident in their surroundings. Ultimately, the results suggest that the community's peace and order situation is stable and robust, providing a foundation for continued social harmony and well-being. (Huda et al., 2020)

The findings on the peace and order situation in the community have important implications for both local authorities and residents. The high ratings for public safety and community discipline suggest that current efforts to maintain order whether through law enforcement, community initiatives, or resident cooperation are effective and widely recognized. This indicates that reinforcing community norms, promoting collective responsibility, and supporting active participation in maintaining safety can further strengthen the overall sense of security. (Sapkota, 2024) For local authorities, the results highlight the importance of sustaining programs that encourage law-abiding behavior and proactive community engagement. (Modise, 2023) For residents, the findings suggest that continued adherence to community standards and collaboration with law enforcement are essential in preserving a stable and orderly environment. These results imply that maintaining peace and order is a shared responsibility that benefits from both structured interventions and the active commitment of the community.

## VI. Significant relationship between police visibility and the community's perception of peace and order

The relationship between police visibility and the community's perception of peace and order examines how the presence and accessibility of law enforcement officers influence residents' sense of safety, security, and social stability. Police visibility, through regular patrols, public interactions, and strategic deployment, is often seen as a tangible indicator of law enforcement effectiveness and commitment to maintaining order. Understanding this relationship is essential, as it sheds light on whether increased officer presence correlates with stronger public confidence, reduced fear of crime, and heightened compliance with community norms. (Lin, 2022) Investigating this link provides valuable insights into how proactive policing strategies can contribute not only to crime prevention but also to fostering a community environment that is perceived as orderly and secure.

Table 4. Test of relationship between police visibility and the community's perception of peace and order

Variables	r value	p value	Remarks
Police Visibility and Peace and Order Situation	0.159	0.66	Not Significant

Note: \* $p < 0.05$  (significant); \*\* $p < 0.01$  (highly significant)

The results of the correlation analysis between police visibility and the community's perception of peace and order indicate a weak positive relationship. The computed Pearson correlation coefficient,  $r \approx 0.159$ , suggests that as police visibility increases, there is a slight tendency for the perception of peace and order to increase as well. However, the relationship is minimal, and the calculated p-value of approximately 0.66 indicates that this correlation is not statistically significant at conventional levels (e.g.,  $p < 0.05$ ). This suggests that within the observed dataset, variations in police visibility do not strongly predict changes in the community's perception of safety, discipline, or overall order. (Yesberg et al., 2021) In other words, while residents may recognize police presence, it does not necessarily translate directly into stronger perceptions of peace and order in a measurable statistical sense.

Several factors may explain this weak and non-significant relationship. The consistently high mean scores for both police visibility (mean  $\approx 3.59$ ) and peace and order (mean  $\approx 3.59$ ) indicate that residents generally perceive both variables positively, leaving limited variation to detect a strong correlation. Additionally, perceptions of peace and order are influenced by multiple factors beyond police presence, including community discipline, social cohesion, informal social controls, and local governance practices. (Kochel et al., 2021) Therefore, even with regular patrols and visible policing, the community's overall sense of safety may depend more on collective behavior, civic responsibility, and neighborhood dynamics than on visibility alone. These findings highlight the complexity of the relationship between law enforcement activities and public perception, suggesting that police visibility, while important, is only one component of broader strategies to maintain peace and order in the community. (Asad et al., 2025)

The weak and non-significant correlation between police visibility and the community's perception of peace and order carries important implications for law enforcement and community safety strategies. (Abdi et al., 2025) It suggests that simply increasing police presence may not be sufficient to enhance residents' sense of security or strengthen perceptions of public order. For police agencies, this highlights the need to complement visibility with trust-building measures, active community engagement, and fair enforcement practices to make their presence more meaningful and impactful. (Reinsch et al., 2025) For the community, it underscores that collective responsibility, adherence to social norms, and cooperation with law enforcement are critical

components in fostering a safe and orderly environment. Overall, the results imply that maintaining peace and order is a multifaceted process that requires not only visible policing but also proactive, relationship-oriented strategies that address both the social and structural dimensions of community safety.

## VII. Significant relationship between community engagement and the community's perception of peace and order

The relationship between community engagement and the community's perception of peace and order explore how interactions and collaborations between residents and law enforcement influence the sense of safety, stability, and social harmony within a community. (Mbaraka, 2023) Community engagement encompasses both active participations, such as attending meetings, neighborhood patrols, and local initiatives, and formal mechanisms, including consultations, workshops, and coordinated programs with police. Investigating this relationship is crucial because higher levels of engagement are believed to strengthen trust, enhance communication, and foster collective responsibility, all of which contribute to a more positive perception of peace and order. (Procentese et al., 2023) Understanding whether and how community engagement correlates with perceived safety can provide valuable insights for developing effective policing strategies and initiatives that support a secure and orderly environment.

Table 5. Test of significant relationship between community engagement and the community's perception of peace and order

Variables	r value	p value	Remark
Community Engagement and Peace and Order Situation	-0.24	0.50	Not Significant

Note: \* $p < 0.05$  (significant); \*\* $p < 0.01$  (highly significant)

The results of the test for a significant relationship between community engagement and the community's perception of peace and order, as presented in Table 5, indicate a weak negative correlation with an r value of  $-0.24$ . This suggests that, within the observed data, higher levels of community engagement do not correspond to higher perceptions of peace and order; in fact, the relationship is slightly inverse, though minimal. The p value of  $0.50$  is substantially greater than the conventional significance threshold of  $0.05$ , indicating that this correlation is not statistically significant. This implies that, in this sample, variations in community engagement do not meaningfully predict or explain differences in how residents perceive the safety, discipline, or overall order of their community. (Hesari et al., 2020) The findings highlight that while engagement activities are important for building relationships between residents and law enforcement, their presence alone may not directly influence perceptions of peace and order, suggesting that other factors such as trust, enforcement effectiveness, or social cohesion may play a more critical role in shaping community perceptions. (Muibu et al., 2022)

The finding that community engagement is not significantly correlated with the community's perception of peace and order carries important implications for both policymakers and law enforcement agencies. (Deglow et al., 2020) It suggests that while engagement activities are valuable for fostering relationships, dialogue, and collaboration between residents and the police, they may not, by themselves, be sufficient to enhance the community's sense of safety and order. For law enforcement, this underscores the importance of combining engagement efforts with tangible outcomes, such as effective crime prevention, visible responsiveness, and trust-building measures, to ensure that participation translates into meaningful improvements in perceived security. For community leaders and residents, the results imply that active involvement should be complemented by collective responsibility, adherence to social norms, and collaboration with authorities to sustain a safe and orderly environment. Overall, the findings highlight that promoting peace and order requires a multifaceted approach that integrates engagement with practical, outcome-oriented strategies. (Tagorda et al., 2023)

## VIII. Conclusion

The study revealed that the community perceives a very high level of police visibility and engagement, indicating that law enforcement officers are consistently present and actively involved in both formal and informal activities within the area. (Mulrooney et al., 2024) Residents also reported a highly positive peace and order situation, reflecting strong community discipline and adherence to social norms. However, statistical analyses showed that neither police visibility nor community engagement had a significant direct relationship with the community's perception of peace and order. (Muibu et al., 2022) Overall, the study underscores that maintaining a safe and orderly community requires a multifaceted approach that integrates police presence, meaningful engagement, and active participation from the community itself. (Headley et al., 2024)

## IX. Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is recommended that programs aimed at enhancing children's safety should focus on strengthening both parental awareness and monitoring practices. Parents should be encouraged to participate in workshops and training sessions that provide updated knowledge on online risks, technical tools, and legal-ethical considerations, while also emphasizing strategies for effective supervision and communication with children. (Ince, 2025) Additionally, integrating structured digital literacy programs in schools and communities can reinforce children's safe behaviors and ensure consistent application of knowledge in real-life contexts. Combining parental engagement, educational initiatives, and technological resources, stakeholders can create a holistic approach that empowers children to navigate digital and physical environments safely and responsibly. (Nudin et al., 2024)

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The authors have declared no competing interests.

### Consent for Publication

The authors declare that they consented to the publication of this study.

### Authors' Contributions

All the authors took part in literature review, research and manuscript writing equally.

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