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RESEARCH ARTICLE

AUTOMATIC DEPUTATION: IMPACT ON POLICE FUNCTIONS

Archer Catipay Campoy¹ and Jouhryn Catipay Campoy²

1. College of Arts and Sciences, Jose Rizal Memorial State University, Sta. Cruz, Dapitan City 7101, Zamboanga Del Norte, Philippines.
2. College of Criminal Justice Education, Jose Rizal Memorial State University, Dipolog City 7100, Zamboanga Del Norte, Philippines.

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Abstract

The study aimed to determine the extent of the exercise of the automatic deputation by the local chief executive as perceived by the respondents and the level of impact of the exercise of automatic deputation by the local chief executive on the different types of police functions. The research study utilized a descriptive methodology. The researchers designed a questionnaire. The statistical tools included weighted mean, Pearson r Product Moment Coefficient Correlation (r), and the T-Test for Correlated Data in order to determine the significance of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The findings revealed that the extent of the lawful exercise of the automatic deputation by the local chief executive positively impacts police functions. The authority of the mayor to control and supervise the Philippine National Police is an effective instrument of the state which guarantees the delivery of professional and excellent police services to the public. Thus, the authors would like to offer that the police officers should deliver professional services with impartiality and in the interest of the public; should conduct themselves in accordance with standards and laws; the local chief executive sustains honest adherence to legal mandate in the exercise of control and supervision over the PNP; the Congress of the Philippines should review Republic Act 8551 in order to reinforce the mechanisms that would entirely prevent abuses by local chief executives.

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Introduction:-

A report published in 2001 in Pakistan revealed the arbitrary and whimsical mismanagement of police by the executive authority of the state at every level. As a result, police standards kept declining while public mistrust of the police kept increasing (Grare 2010). Reports in the ABS-CBN revealed that few of the uniformed men were criticized for their involvement in acts aligned with the interests and directives of some local chief executives (The Philippine Star) | Updated November 22, 2012). A survey from the Social Weather Stations (SWS) indicated that the Philippine National Police (PNP) received a "bad" rating in 2005, a rating retained in 2006 (Manila Standard, 7 July 2006; The Manila Times, 8 July 2006).

Corresponding Author:- Archer Catipay Campoy

Address:- College of Arts and Sciences, Jose Rizal Memorial State University, Sta. Cruz, Dapitan City 7101, Zamboanga Del Norte, Philippines.

Manwong and San Diego (2010) exemplified that police work is ever-changing and always challenging. The whole public expects more satisfaction from the police services. They stressed that in policing accountability is a vital element if the police officers are to achieve lawfulness and legitimacy. It includes what the police do and how they perform.

Automatic deputation refers to the exercise of operational supervision and control over the Philippine National Police by Local Chief Executives. The term deployment exemplifies the orderly and organized physical movement of elements or units of the PNP within the province, city, or municipality for purposes of employment; while employment is the utilization of units or elements of the PNP for purposes of protection of lives and properties, enforcement of laws, maintenance of peace and order, prevention of crimes, arrest of criminal offenders and bringing the offenders to justice, and ensuring public safety, particularly in the suppression of disorders, riots, lawlessness, violence, rebellious and seditious conspiracy, insurgency, subversion or other related activities. Deployment pertains to the orderly and organized physical movement of elements or units of the PNP within the province, city, or municipality for purposes of employment.

Operational supervision and control under the law pertain to the power to direct, superintend, and oversee the day-to-day functions of police investigation of crime, crime prevention activities, and traffic control in accordance with the rules and regulations promulgated by the Commission. It includes the power to direct the employment and deployment of units or elements of the PNP.

The results of the study shall provide the basis for the President of the Philippines to remind the NAPOLCOM and the Department of Interior and Local Government to perform duties and functions with the highest degree of commitment and integrity. The President of the Philippines inhibits the exercise of appointment, removal, control, and supervision over the PNP for the reason of faithfully executing office duties and functions; offers a reasonable ground to the Congress of the Philippines - the members of the House of Representatives and the Senate to revisit the provisions of Republic Act 8551 and examine the same to effect amendments of those provisions that are inimical to the public interest; check of abuse of automatic deputation of local chief executives that affects police performance; offer a reliable basis as on parameters in the exercise of automatic deputation; exemplify objective basis to the NAPOLCOM in the formulation of measures that checks compliance of the PNP to the professional ethical standards and to laws thereby increasing PNP accountability; help in regaining the trust and confidence of the people the PNP serves. Due police services are timely delivered; support the community to receive just and proper treatment from accountable police officers that could meet the community's expectations to the fullest; serve as a reference to criminology students in the study of police accountability.

This study is anchored on Republic Act 8551, known as "The Philippine National Police Reform and Reorganization Act of 1998". This law reorganized the Philippine National Police and pointed out that the PNP shall be a community and service-oriented agency to be administered and controlled by a national police commission. This reorganization is intended to ensure accountability and uprightness in police exercise of discretion as well as to achieve efficiency and effectiveness of its members and units in the performance of their functions. Local chief executives are by law authorized to exercise operational supervision and control over the Philippine National Police within their area of jurisdiction. This includes the power to direct the employment and deployment of units or elements of the PNP, through the station commander, to ensure public safety and effective maintenance of peace and order within the locality (www.chanrobles.com).

Bermas (2004) emphasized that the police should maintain a high standard of morality and professionalism. The police should not work in the interest of any politician. Police officers must act in a manner that will not undercut public trust and confidence and behave in such a way that will not discredit the agency.

The issues of police activities that are in accord with local chief executives encouraged the researchers to conduct a study to look into the impact of authority granted by law to local chief executives termed "automatic deputation". This is pertaining to the exercise of operational supervision and control by the local executive over the Philippine National Police within their area of jurisdiction.

The study was designed to find out the impact of the exercise of automatic deputation by the Local Chief Executive to police functions in Dipolog City in the calendar years 2018-2019. Specifically, the study aimed to determine the extent of the exercise of the automatic deputation by the local chief executive as perceived by the

respondents; decipher the level of impact of the exercise of automatic deputation by the local chief executive on the different types of police functions, and interpret the significant relationship between the extent of the exercise of the automatic deputation by the local chief executive as perceived by the respondents and the level of impact of the exercise of the automatic deputation by the local chief executive on the different types of police functions.

Research Methods:-

The research study utilized a descriptive methodology. The researchers designed a questionnaire. A letter addressed to the chief of police in Dipolog City Police Station was drafted by the researchers seeking permission to conduct a study and administer the instrument with the subordinate police officers. With his approval, the researchers commenced the administration and thereafter collected the questionnaires. The data acquired were then tallied and computed. The respondents of the study were members of the Philippine National Police detailed at Dipolog City Police Station. The current strength of the PNP Dipolog is more or less 180 police officers. Only 100 police officers were involved in the study. Under the law, police officers are under the control and supervision of the NAPOLCOM. A local unit of the PNP is under the control and supervision of the local chief executive through automatic deputation of the commission per the mandate of the law.

The researchers formulated a questionnaire composed of two parts. One is designed to obtain the extent of exercise by the local chief executives of their authority as deputized agents of the National Police Commission. The other part obtained the level of effects of the exercise of automatic deputation by local chief executives on police functions. To ensure its reliability, the questionnaire was referred to their adviser, a law practitioner, and a statistician. It was examined and found suitable to answer the problems of the study. Thereafter, the researchers submitted the instrument for validation. To draw out the responses of respondents on the extent of the exercise of the local chief executives of their authority as deputized agents of the National Police Commission, the researchers adhered to the five-point Likert scale as follows; 5, interpreted as very much observable; 4, interpreted as much observable; 3, interpreted as observable; 2, interpreted less observable; 1, interpreted as not observable.

For the level of effects of automatic deputation of local chief executives on police functions, the researchers used the rating as follows; 5, interpreted as very much affected; 4, interpreted as much affected; 3, interpreted as affected; 2, interpreted as less affected; 1, interpreted as not affected. To gather the data needed, the researchers drafted a letter addressed to the authority to seek permission to administer the instrument to his subordinates. The instrument of the study was personally forwarded to the authority. Upon his approval, the researchers distributed the questionnaire to policemen and retrieved the same. It was tallied and statistically treated. The weighted mean was used to measure central tendency, and to determine the extent of the exercise of local chief executives of their authority as deputized agents of the National Police Commission. Moreover, it was used to know the level of its impact on the different types of police functions. The Pearson r Product Moment Coefficient Correlation (r) was used in evaluating if there is a relationship between the exercise of the local chief executives of their authority as deputized agents of NAPOLCOM and the level of its impact on the different types of police functions. The T-Test for Correlated Data was used to determine the significance of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables based on the coefficient obtained by the Pearson product-moment coefficient.

Results And Discussion:-

Problem No. 1 The extent of the exercise of the automatic deputation by the local chief executive as perceived by the respondents

Table 1 presents the rate of the extent of the exercise of the automatic deputation by the local chief executive. As shown in the table, the average weighted mean of the extent of the exercise of the automatic deputation was 3.84 interpreted as much observable. This means that the local chief executive exercised control and supervision over the PNP in areas of appointment, employment, and deployment.

In cases allowed by law, the local chief executive exercises disciplinary power over police officers whose conduct is unbecoming. Chooses the chief of police had a mean of 4.50 interpreted as very much observable. Reviews plans and programs obtained a mean of 3.99 interpreted as much observable. This means that the local chief executive

evaluates the programs of the police. The local chief executive even reasonably forfeited the pay of police officers supported with a mean of 3.31 interpreted as observable.

The findings imply that the Philippine National Police is not solely managed by officers in the higher echelon. Controlling in theory as cited by Mejia, et. al. (2005) is a managerial function. This means to say that the local chief executive took part in the management of the police force only in a limited scope of control. Very evident that the controlling power of the local chief executive and the authority to appoint, employ and deploy police officers have influenced police functions. In this case, the police seemingly function in the interest of the local mayor instead of the interest of the public.

Note that the descriptors were accompanied with phrases such as “deemed most qualified”, “in exigent case”, “for due cause”, “endorses qualified applicant”, and “reasonable ground”. The descriptors suggest that the mayor was very careful in exercising the automatic deputation. This means that nothing in the automatic deputation is detrimental to the welfare of the public.

Controlling in essence is checking or measuring the deviation of actual performance from the standard performance and taking corrective actions (Brech, 2012). It is then clear that controlling is not a tool that allows the mayor to encroach into the basic functions of the police but is a tool that checks the conformity of police actions to the standards and a state mechanism that protects the public from abuses which the police might commit. Further, the power to control is not prone to abuse or to the wrong application by the mayor since the law is very clever in safeguarding the public. Section 65 of Republic Act 8551 points out that automatic deputation is subject to withdrawal by the commission. Further, local government executives particularly the mayor shall exercise authority over the PNP, supervise and control the police unit and all other functions as may be allowed by the commission (www.chanrobles.com).

Table 1:- The extent of Exercise of the Automatic Deputation by Local Chief Executive.

Exercise of Automatic Deputation	Mean	Interpretation
1. Chooses the chief of police deemed most qualified	4.50	VMO
2. Recalls assignment of police in exigent case	3.93	MO
3. Suspends or forfeits pay of police officer or a combination thereof for due cause	3.31	O
4. Endorses PNP qualified applicants during the hiring	3.77	MO
5. Recommends the transfer of police officer on reasonable ground	3.99	MO
6. Reviews police plans and programs	3.98	MO
7. Oversees police activities	3.57	MO
8. Recommends promotion from the rank of the police officer	4.00	MO
9. Designs demeanor control mechanisms of the PNP station	3.60	MO
10. Imposes disciplinary action against erring police officer	3.71	MO
Average Weighted Mean	3.84	MO

Source: Processed/Calculated by the authors (2019)

Problem No. 2 The level of the impact of the exercise of the automatic deputation by the local chief executive on the different types of police functions

Reflected in table 2 is the level of the impact of the exercise of the automatic deputation by the local chief executive on the different types of police functions. It can be observed on the table that the average weighted mean of the level of impact of the exercise of the automatic deputation by the local chief executive on the different types of police functions was 3.94 interpreted as much affected. The descriptors such as maintenance of peace and order with a mean of 4.49, enforcement of laws with a mean of 4.31, and crime prevention obtained higher ratings which were interpreted as very much affected. This means that the level of impact of the exercise of the automatic deputation by the local chief executive in the areas of maintenance of peace and order, law enforcement, and crime prevention was very high, or very close.

The city mayor gave optimum supervision and very high-level control over the PNP in the performance of their general concerns than the specific police functions with ratings obtained lower by one degree. This means that the Philippine National Police is not an independent agency of the government. It exists under the control and supervision of the local mayor as conferred by law. Section 64 of Republic Act 8551 provides that governors and mayors, upon having been elected and living qualified as such, are automatically deputized as representatives of the National Police Commission in their respective jurisdiction. As deputized agents of the Commission, local government executives can inspect police forces and units, conduct audits, and exercise other functions as may be duly authorized by the Commission. Also, they shall exercise control and supervision over the police (www.chanrobles.com).

Note that the phrase of the law includes “as may be allowed by the Commission”. This means that automatic deputation is not an absolute authority. Local chief executives cannot their own discretion control and supervise the police. The exercise must be allowed the commission and be within the ambit of the law. To prevent abuse of authority by the local mayor, the NAPOLCOM is mandated by law to monitor the performance of the local chief executive. Other disciplinary mechanisms such as Internal Affairs Service (IAS) and the Peoples Law Enforcement Board (PLEB) are created by law purposely to regulate police actions and to hear and try cases involving police irregularities.

With the existing legal limitations, the findings imply an improved performance of the police force since they are under the control of the local mayor expected to put into effect the given authority in a lawful manner. Not only the PNP is accountable for misconduct but also the mayor is answerable. Amine (2012) stated that when ethics management tools and ethical organizational practices are used in tandem, organizational trust can be advanced. They found out that ethical behavior has an impact on the performance of an organization and has a positive correlation with organizational performance. The role of management is to guide rather than to order the actions (Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2010). UN Police Roles and Responsibilities (2006) provide that the police force needs to be a non-partisan institution that represents all the groups in the nation. They shall be responsible to the public by obeying and being loyal to a duly elected government.

Table 2:- Levels of the Impact of the Exercise of the Automatic Deputation by Local Chief Executive on the Different Types of Police Functions.

Effects of the Exercise of Automatic Deputation	Mean	Interpretation
1. Maintenance of peace and order	4.49	VMA
2. Enforcement of laws	4.31	VMA
3. Crime prevention	4.45	VMA
4. Investigation of crimes	3.59	MA
5. Arrest of criminals	3.85	MA
6. Control of crimes	3.99	MA
7. Leadership style of the police	3.85	MA
8. Police critical decision-making	3.70	MA
9. Operational procedures	3.70	MA
10. Delivery of social services	3.67	MA
Average Weighted Mean	3.94	MA

Source: Processed/Calculated by the authors (2019).

Problem No. 3

The significant relationship between the extent of the exercise of the automatic deputation by the local chief executive as perceived by the respondents and the level of the impact of the exercise of the automatic deputation by the local chief executive on the different types of police functions

Table 3 presents the test of the relationship between the extent of the exercise of the local chief executive of authority as deputized agent of the National Police Commission as perceived by the respondents and the level of the impact of the exercise of automatic deputation of the local chief executive on the different types of police functions. The table revealed that the exercise of the local chief executive of the automatic deputation had a mean of

3.836 and a standard deviation of 0.324. The effects of the exercise of the automatic deputation by the local chief executive on the different types of police functions obtained a mean of 3.940 with a standard deviation of 0.310.

When Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was applied, it revealed 0.8345 which means that the two variables had a high correlation. This means that the extent of the exercise of the automatic deputation by the local chief executive had a high correlation with the level of the impact of the exercise of automatic deputation on the different types of police functions. When the t-test was applied, the variables yielded a calculated t-value of 14.9928 which is greater than the tabulated t-value of 1.645. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between the extent of the exercise of the automatic deputation by the local chief executive and the level of the impact of the exercise of the automatic deputation on the different types of police functions.

This further means that the extent of the exercise of the automatic deputation by the mayor significantly affects the quality of police performance. The quality of performance of the police speaks to the quality of exercise by the local mayor of his/her mandate. The automatic deputation granted by law to the local chief executive is a legal responsibility. Delizo (2013) pointed out that responsibility is given along with accountability. This means that the mayor given the responsibility to control and over the Philippine National Police is not only responsible for accomplishing the mandated function but is answerable too.

The findings imply that the local chief executive as he/she is accountable for the actions of the police controls and supervises the police force in the interest of the public. Besides, the election of the mayor to the office was definitely because of a verified showing of genuine concern for public welfare. Accountability includes responsibility for giving proper directions and preparing police officers for their work. It follows that accountability is not limited to the actions of individual officers but applies to supervisors as well as the agency as a whole (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2011).

Table 3:- Test of Relationship between Extent of Exercise of the Local Chief Executive as perceived by the respondents and the Level of the Impact of Exercise of the Automatic Deputation on Different Types of Police Functions.

Variables	Mean	SD	Computed r	Computed t	Interpretation
Exercise of Automatic Deputation by Local Chief Executive over the PNP	3.836	0.324	0.8345	14.9928	Ho Rejected
Effects of Exercise of Automatic Deputation by Local Chief Executive over the PNP	3.940	0.310			

Source: Processed/Calculated by the authors (2019)

$$\alpha = 0.05$$

$$df = > 30$$

$$TV = 1.645$$

Conclusion:-

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that the extent of the lawful exercise of the automatic deputation by the local chief executive positively impacts police functions. The authority of the mayor to control and supervise the Philippine National Police is an effective instrument of the state which guarantees the delivery of professional and excellent police services to the public. Thus, the authors would like to offer that the police officers should deliver professional services with impartiality and in the interest of the public. They should conduct themselves in accordance with standards and laws; the local chief executive sustains honest adherence to legal mandate in the exercise of control and supervision over the PNP; the Congress of the Philippines should review Republic Act 8551 in order to reinforce the mechanisms that would entirely prevent abuses by local chief executives of their automatic deputation either through a proposed amendment or proposal of the new bill, and further research may be undertaken to establish the true perception of the public of the police force in Dipolog City.

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