

Custodial duties are more rewarding: A comparative analysis of quality of work life among personnel in uniformed tri-bureaus of the Philippines

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
DOI:10.46223/HCMCOUJS.soci.en.16.5.3796.2026 Received: October 11th, 2024 Revised: December 10th, 2024 Accepted: December 17th, 2024 <i>Keywords:</i> comparative analysis; criminal justice education; fireman; jail officer; policeman; quality of work life	The study is descriptive-comparative research that aims to determine whether a significant difference exists in the quality of work life among tri-bureau uniformed personnel in selected municipalities of Cotabato Province, analyzed according to their organizational membership. The study involved 120 uniformed personnel from the Philippine National Police (PNP), Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), and Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) in Kabacan and Kidapawan City. Respondents were selected using stratified proportional sampling. Data were collected through a survey approach and analyzed using mean calculations and the Kruskal-Wallis H Test. The study concluded that there is a significant difference in the quality of work life among the tri-bureau uniformed personnel based on their organizational membership, suggesting that jail officers experience a better quality of work life compared to policemen and firemen in the Philippines.

1. Introduction

In today’s ever-evolving workplace, the concept of Quality of Work Life (QWL) has garnered significant attention as organizations strive to create a conducive and fulfilling environment for their employees. Understanding the factors that contribute to individual well-being and satisfaction within professional settings is crucial. Defined as the extent to which an employee meets personal and professional needs through workplace participation while achieving organizational objectives, QWL plays a vital role in overall employee well-being, job satisfaction, and performance. By enhancing QWL, organizations can effectively address these concerns and alleviate employee stress.

Moreover, Nitafan and Idris (2024) suggested that quality of work life is a multidimensional concept encompassing nine domains: work environment, organizational culture and climate, relationships and cooperation, training and development, compensation and rewards, facilities, job satisfaction and job security, autonomy of work, and adequacy of resources. Their construct validity is widely used in the literature due to its intrapersonal and organizational assessment of quality of work life.

Moreover, the significance of a well-designed and comfortable workspace cannot be overstated. It greatly impacts employee morale, productivity, and compliance with company policies (Putri et al., 2019). Employees who feel comfortable and supported in their work environment are more likely to exhibit discipline and motivation toward organizational goals. Tesmanto and Rina (2022) emphasize the importance of fostering a work environment that

promotes strong relationships, creating a sense of a home away from home. Employees seek workplaces that are safe, secure, clean, well-lit, and free from distractions that could impair performance. The quality of the work environment can be assessed based on factors such as pollution, unhealthy conditions, and the overall workplace atmosphere.

Organizational culture profoundly influences member behavior and output. It is often articulated as a collection of guiding principles formalized through company rules and regulations (Vito, 2020). According to Hapsari et al. (2021), a strong company culture rooted in values can enhance job productivity. When organizations achieve high efficiency, instilling corporate values becomes more attainable (Saluy et al., 2021). Paaïs and Pattiruhu (2020) described organizational culture as the habitual practices within an organization, shaped by employees' core beliefs and ideas aimed at addressing external adaptation and internal integration challenges (Limaj & Bernroider, 2019). This comprehensive concept is foundational to creating an optimal organizational climate.

Further, effective communication and collaboration between employees and superiors are critical for managing organizational decisions, conflicts, and problem-solving (Krisdwiputri & Handayani, 2022). Positive working relationships should be built on individual skills and potential, rather than irrelevant factors such as gender or race.

On the other hand, training plays an essential role in motivating personnel, particularly in public and political service, by equipping them with the knowledge and experience necessary to achieve organizational goals in alignment with public policy directives (Amegayibor, 2021). Krisdwiputri and Handayani (2022) highlight that training and development activities enhance employees' capabilities and showcase their potential as individuals and teams. Their study indicates that diverse training methods - such as job orientation, job rotation, workshops, conferences, and classroom lectures - substantially enhance organizational performance. Amegayibor (2021) further emphasizes the strong correlation between various training strategies and quality service delivery.

To boost productivity and motivate employees, organizations must provide competitive compensation, reward high achievers, and retain committed staff (Purwanto, 2020). Compensation is a critical component of employee rewards (Kadir et al., 2019; Siramiati et al., 2016). Fair pay and benefits not only inspire the individual receiving them but also foster healthy competition among peers (Krisdwiputri & Handayani, 2022). Moreover, reward systems are vital tools for managing employee performance, encompassing both monetary and non-monetary incentives that help organizations enhance workforce productivity (Noorazem et al., 2021). Employees who have access to supportive facilities can experience emotional and physical benefits, enabling them to perform their tasks effectively (Krisdwiputri & Handayani, 2022). Furthermore, an optimal work environment provides opportunities for job independence and access to relevant information, supporting staff motivation and retention (Nanjundeswaraswamy, 2019).

Job satisfaction is crucial for enhancing employee performance, as it encompasses both positive and negative emotions associated with one's employment. Rivaldo et al. (2020) define job satisfaction as an individual's perspective, while Oktavianti (2020) emphasizes the enjoyment derived from one's work. Amin (2021) suggests that job satisfaction reflects a positive attitude toward one's tasks, with high levels linked to increased confidence and enthusiasm among employees.

Further, the success of any organization hinges on having the right resources aligned with its objectives, including not just materials but also time, manpower, and information

(Krisdwiputri & Handayani, 2022). On the other hand, providing employees with autonomy in their work fosters a creative and independent environment, empowering them to make decisions and contribute to the team.

In the Philippines, the Department of Interior and Local Government Act of 1990 established the Philippine National Police (PNP), the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) as uniformed tri-bureaus. These agencies are pivotal in fulfilling the government's constitutional mandate to maintain peace and order, protect life, liberty, and property, and promote the general welfare necessary for all citizens to enjoy the blessings of democracy. However, the nature of their work is often challenging, as a high level of dedication, resilience, and adaptability is needed to succeed in their job. Given their critical role in law enforcement and public management, it is essential for the national government to develop policies and implement programs that enhance the quality of work life of the uniformed personnel, ensuring they can effectively fulfill their mandated duties as defenders of human life and human rights.

Based on the literature scanning of the researchers, it was learned that most of the research on quality of work life focuses on the categorization and identification of the correlates of the construct, particularly in the health care, education, government, and the private sector. However, an empirical gap exists concerning the meaningful difference in the quality of work life of personnel in the law enforcement agencies in the Philippines.

This study aims to determine the significant difference in the quality of work life of uniformed personnel in the tri-bureau agencies in the Cotabato Province, Philippines. The findings of the study can serve as a guide for developing and implementing evidence-based strategies and policies aimed at enhancing the quality of work life of the policemen, firemen, and jail officers in the country. Recognizing the specific challenges and opportunities faced by the uniformed personnel enables organizations to tailor their practices and initiatives to better align with their needs, ultimately improving job satisfaction, well-being, and overall performance.

1.1. Objectives of the study

The study generally aimed to determine if there is a significant difference in the quality of work life of the uniformed personnel in the tri-bureaus in Kabacan and Kidapawan City, Cotabato Province. Specifically, it aims to: 1) assess the quality of work life of the uniformed personnel in terms of work environment, organizational culture and climate, relationships and cooperation, training and development, compensation and rewards, facilities, job satisfaction and job security, autonomy of work, and adequacy of resources; 2) and determine if there is a significant difference in the quality of work life of the uniformed personnel when analyzed according to their organizational membership.

1.2. Hypothesis

The null hypothesis of the study was tested at .05 level of significance, which assumed no significant difference in the quality of work life of the uniformed tri-bureau personnel in the Philippine National Police (PNP), the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP).

2. Theoretical basis

The conceptualization of quality of work life is anchored on the construct validity of Swamy et al. (2015) who determined nine social dimensions of quality of work life, comprising

work environment, organizational culture and climate, relationships and cooperation, training and development, compensation and rewards, facilities, job satisfaction and job security, autonomy of work, and adequacy of resources. According to the scholars, each factor plays a crucial role in shaping an individual's overall work experience. A positive work environment, for instance, can alleviate stress and enhance job satisfaction. Adequate compensation and rewards serve as motivators for employees to excel in their roles. Furthermore, training and development initiatives enable skill enhancement and career progression, while autonomy in work empowers employees and fosters a sense of fulfillment.

Moreover, the study used the framework of the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) in describing the quality of work life of uniformed personnel of the tri-bureaus in the Philippines based on their profile, comprising their rank, position, assignment, and location. Accordingly, higher-ranking personnel across the three bureaus generally experience a better quality of work life due to higher salaries, improved benefits, and increased advancement opportunities. Additionally, personnel assigned to challenging roles, such as counter-insurgency operations, firefighting, or work in high-security prisons, tend to have a lower quality of work life compared to those with less demanding assignments. Moreover, personnel stationed in remote or underdeveloped areas often face a lower quality of work life due to limited access to necessities, poor infrastructure, and security concerns, in contrast to their counterparts in urban areas.

3. Methodology

The study used a descriptive-comparative research design as a strategy for the collection, analysis, interpretation, and presentation of research data. A descriptive research design was used to assess the quality of life of the tri-bureau uniformed personnel in terms of work environment, organizational culture and climate, relationships and cooperation, training and development, compensation and rewards, facilities, job satisfaction and job security, autonomy of work, and adequate resources. Comparative research design was used to determine if there is a significant difference in the quality of work life of the tri-bureau uniformed personnel when analyzed according to their profile.

The study was conducted in tri-bureau agencies, consisting of the Philippine National Police, Bureau of Fire Protection, and Bureau of Jail Management and Penology in Kabacan and Kidapawan City, Cotabato Province. 120 uniformed personnel were selected through stratified proportional sampling.

Data were collected through a survey approach, where questionnaires were administered to the participating uniformed personnel. The survey approach is important in data collection as it enables the systematic gathering of quantifiable data from a targeted population, providing insights into opinions, behaviors, and trends for informed decision-making (Nitafan et al., 2024). The survey questionnaire was modified from the study of Swamy et al. (2015). The questionnaire has two parts. The first part gathered data about the respondents' profiles in terms of their agency, designation (municipality), age, and gender. The second part obtained data on the quality of work life in terms of work environment, organizational culture and climate, relationships and cooperation, training and development, compensation and rewards, facilities, job satisfaction and job security, autonomy of work, and adequacy of resources. The researcher modified a questionnaire to ascertain the quality of work life of the respondents. The questionnaire was adapted from the Quality of Work Life Scale of Swamy et al. (2015). The scale has five response options that range from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Moreover, the data were analyzed using frequency counts, mean, and Kruskal Wallis H Test. Frequency count was used to identify the organizational membership of the uniformed personnel from the tri-bureaus. Further, mean was used to assess the quality of work life of the respondents in terms of their work environment, organizational culture and climate, relationships and cooperation, training and development, compensation and rewards, facilities, job satisfaction and job security, autonomy of work, and adequacy of resources. As for the interpretation of the mean score, the researchers adopted the framework of Nitafan and Idris (2024), which suggests that a variable with a mean score ranging from 4.20 to 5.00 indicates that the measure is consistently and always manifested, signifying a highly favorable work environment. A mean score between 3.40 and 4.19 suggests that the measure is present in the majority of cases, reflecting generally positive conditions while highlighting areas that may require improvement. A mean score within the range of 2.60 to 3.39 implies that the measure is evident in many situations but not in most cases, revealing inconsistencies in its presence. Meanwhile, a mean score between 1.80 and 2.59 signifies that the measure is observed only in a few instances, suggesting notable gaps in its application. Lastly, a mean score ranging from 1.00 to 1.79 indicates that the measure is not manifested at all, pointing to an unfavorable work-life quality.

Finally, the Kruskal-Wallis H test was used to determine if there is a significant difference in the quality of work life of the tri-bureau uniformed personnel when analyzed according to their organizational membership. This non-parametric test was selected because the assumption of normality was not met for the data, as indicated by the results of the test of normality through Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Non-parametric tests like the Kruskal-Wallis H test are robust to violations of normality and are suitable for ordinal or non-normally distributed interval data, making them an appropriate choice for comparing differences among the groups.

4. Results and discussion

The concept of quality of work life encompasses various factors, including job satisfaction, the creation of humane work environments, job security, employees' perceptions of job content, opportunities for career advancement, autonomy, teamwork, participation in decision-making, effective communication, fair compensation and benefits, managerial support, work-life balance, and the provision of safe and healthy working conditions (Abdullah et al., 2018).

Ahmad (2013) defined quality of work life as a positive work environment characterized by factors such as fair compensation, employee benefits, flexible work arrangements, positive relationships, and opportunities for growth. Employees' capacity to manage their personal and professional lives is positively impacted by higher job satisfaction, which is often the result of improved work-life quality (Bhende et al., 2020). Astuti and Soliha (2021) stated that by offering an inventive reward system, a welcoming work environment, chances for challenging work (job enrichment), and more opportunities for personal growth, staff members at the organization can positively respond to their co-workers. As a result, employee performance will rise.

4.1. Quality of work life of uniformed tri-bureau personnel

4.1.1. Work environment of uniformed tri-bureau personnel

Among the tri-bureaus in the selected local government units in the Cotabato Province, it was ascertained that the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) had the best-rated work environment (Mean = 4.28), followed by the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) (Mean = 4.22), and the Philippine National Police (PNP) (Mean = 3.73). Tesmanto and Rina (2022) emphasize the importance of creating a workplace that fosters strong relationships and feels like

a “home away from home” for employees. They stress that employees prioritize a safe, secure, clean, and quiet environment, free from disruptions that might affect performance. Kurniawan and Heryanto (2019) found that factors such as lighting, air temperature, clear job responsibilities, decision-making authority, performance goals, communication, and career growth contribute to a positive work environment.

Further, BFP personnel rated their work environment highly (Mean = 4.28), highlighting the agency’s strong and motivating environment (4.45), excellent working conditions (4.40), and the ability to manage their work style and pace (4.13). However, it was noted that it can be challenging to take time off for personal matters (4.00).

On the other hand, BJMP personnel also reported an excellent work environment (Mean = 4.22), with strong scores for a motivating atmosphere (4.45), good working conditions (4.63), and empowerment over their work style (4.20). However, taking time off for personal or family matters was rated more challenging (3.20).

Finally, PNP personnel rated their work environment as good (Mean = 3.73), benefiting from positive working conditions (4.50) and a motivating environment (4.48). However, the ability to control their work pace (2.83) and take time off for personal matters (2.55) was seen as more limited compared to the other agencies.

4.1.2. Organizational and climate of uniformed tri-bureau personnel

The study found that the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) had the highest-rated organizational culture and climate (Mean = 4.12), followed by the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) (Mean = 3.95), with the Philippine National Police (PNP) (Mean = 3.69) ranking third. Hapsari et al. (2021) highlight that a strong organizational culture based on shared values can enhance job productivity, while Saluy et al. (2021) argue that efficient organizations are better positioned to instill corporate values among their employees. Organizational culture is shaped by shared beliefs and values, influencing how employees interact, solve challenges, and adhere to internal procedures (Arif et al., 2019). According to Paais and Pattiruhu (2020), organizational culture forms the foundation of the organizational climate, which directly impacts employee attitudes and performance (Nabella et al., 2022; Sudarno & Sukmaningrum, 2016).

Further, BJMP personnel reported a good quality of organizational culture and climate (Mean = 4.12). This positive rating is primarily attributed to high levels of cooperation among departments (4.63), a strong sense of pride in working for the agency (4.58), and involvement in decision-making processes (4.35). Additionally, the study found a low level of gender discrimination (1.85).

On the other hand, BFP personnel also experienced a good quality of organizational culture and climate (Mean = 3.95). This rating reflects strong cooperation among departments (4.50), pride in being part of the agency (4.48), and the opportunity to offer comments and suggestions (4.03). The study also revealed a low level of gender discrimination (1.80).

Finally, PNP personnel rated their organizational culture and climate as good (Mean = 3.69). This positive assessment is due to pride in working for the agency (4.10), effective communication of changes (4.08), and departmental cooperation (3.90). The study also indicated a low level of gender discrimination (1.53).

4.1.3. Relationship and cooperation of uniformed tri-bureau personnel

Among the tri-bureaus in the selected local government units in the Cotabato Province, it was assessed that both the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) and the Bureau of Jail Management

and Penology (BJMP) shared the highest ratings for relationship and cooperation (Mean = 4.28), while the Philippine National Police (PNP) followed with a slightly lower rating (Mean = 3.73). Krisdwiputri and Handayani (2022) argue that effective communication and cooperation between employees and superiors are crucial for managing decisions, resolving conflicts, and solving problems in organizations. They emphasize that strong working relationships should be based on individuals' skills and potential, rather than irrelevant factors like gender or race.

Further, BFP personnel reported excellent work relationships and cooperation (Mean = 4.28), highlighting strong communication and collaboration with superiors in decision-making and conflict resolution. This high rating is attributed to a strong sense of belonging within the agency (4.60), harmonious relationships with colleagues (4.53), and very cordial relationships with immediate superiors (4.40). However, the study also noted that the demands of the job can affect the ability to attend to personal matters (3.20).

On the other hand, BJMP personnel also experienced excellent work relationships and cooperation (Mean = 4.28), reflecting high levels of communication and collaboration with superiors. The strong support received from subordinates (4.68), harmonious relationships with colleagues (4.65), and good relationships between heads and personnel (4.50) contributed to this rating. However, the demands of the job were noted to hinder the ability to attend to personal work (2.75).

Finally, PNP personnel reported a good quality of work relationships and cooperation (Mean = 4.18), demonstrating solid communication and collaboration with superiors in decision-making and conflict resolution. The positive rating is largely due to cordial relationships with immediate superiors (4.33), strong support from subordinates (4.30), and a strong sense of belonging within the agency (4.08). However, the job's demands were observed to impact the ability to manage personal responsibilities (3.95).

4.1.4. Training and development of uniformed tri-bureau personnel

The study revealed that the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) had the highest rating for training and development (Mean = 4.58), followed by the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) (Mean = 4.38), with the Philippine National Police (PNP) receiving the lowest score (Mean = 4.28). Amegayibor (2021) emphasizes the importance of training in motivating personnel, particularly in public service, by equipping them with knowledge and experience to achieve organizational objectives that align with public policy. Amegayibor's (2021) research also highlights a strong correlation between various training and development strategies, such as job orientation, workshops, and conferences, and the quality of service delivery.

Moreover, BJMP personnel reported an excellent quality of training and development (Mean = 4.58). This finding indicates a very high level of activity aimed at enhancing skills and job performance. The high rating is primarily due to the agency offering sufficient training opportunities to perform the job competently (4.73), training programs designed to improve interpersonal relationships (4.58), programs helping personnel acquire the skills necessary for effective job performance (4.53), and a strong belief that training programs should be conducted more frequently (4.50).

On the other hand, BFP personnel also reported excellent quality of training and development (Mean = 4.38). The high rating reflects a significant emphasis on employee skill enhancement. This is largely attributed to the effectiveness of training programs in helping personnel acquire necessary job skills (4.60), improving interpersonal relationships (4.50), and

providing sufficient training opportunities for job competence (4.43). There is also a belief that training programs should be more frequent (4.00).

Finally, PNP personnel also experienced excellent quality in training and development, with a mean rating of 4.28. This indicates a high level of activity to enhance skills and performance. The positive rating is attributed to training programs aimed at improving interpersonal relationships (4.33), the provision of adequate training opportunities (4.30), and programs that help personnel gain the skills needed for effective job performance (4.25). There is a strong belief that training programs should be conducted more frequently (4.25).

4.1.5. Compensation and rewards of uniformed tri-bureau personnel

Among the three law enforcement agencies in the selected local government units in the Cotabato Province, the study uncovered that the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) had the highest rating for compensation and rewards (Mean = 4.41), followed by the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) (Mean = 4.33), while the Philippine National Police (PNP) received the lowest score (Mean = 4.08). According to Purwanto (2020), organizations must offer fair compensation and rewards to employees, particularly high achievers, to boost productivity and retain talented staff. Siramiati et al. (2016) and Kadir et al. (2019) further argue that pay and benefits that align with employees' efforts can inspire both the individuals and their colleagues. A well-structured reward system that includes monetary and non-monetary incentives plays a critical role in managing employee performance (Noorazem et al., 2021).

Moreover, BJMP personnel reported an excellent quality of compensation and rewards (Mean = 4.41), indicating strong motivational factors such as remuneration, promotions, and recognition that enhance employee performance. This finding is primarily attributed to perceptions of fair and adequate compensation (4.63), the agency effectively linking rewards to job performance (4.45), paying salaries commensurate with work responsibilities (4.35), and the fair handling of promotions (4.23).

On the other hand, BFP personnel also reported an excellent quality of compensation and rewards (Mean = 4.33), reflecting high motivational factors. This rating is attributed to the agency paying salaries that consider work responsibilities (4.53), the perception of adequate and fair compensation (4.48), the agency linking rewards to job performance (4.13), and the fair handling of promotions (4.13).

Finally, PNP personnel reported a good quality of compensation and rewards (Mean = 4.08), which still reflects high motivational factors. The positive findings are primarily attributed to the fair handling of promotions (4.25), the agency linking rewards to job performance (4.13), paying salaries that align with work responsibilities (4.05), and the perception of fair compensation (3.85).

4.1.6. Facilities enjoyed by uniformed tri-bureau personnel

The study ascertained that the Philippine National Police (PNP) had the highest rating for facilities (Mean = 4.26), followed by the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) (Mean = 4.12), with the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) scoring the lowest (Mean = 4.06). According to Krisdhiputri and Handayani (2022), access to supportive facilities enhances both the emotional and physical well-being of employees, allowing them to perform optimally. Furthermore, Nanjundeswaraswamy (2019) emphasizes that facilities contribute to staff motivation, job independence, and retention by providing a conducive work environment.

Further, PNP personnel reported an excellent quality of facilities (Mean = 4.26), indicating that the agency consistently provides essential amenities and services to support work tasks. This is primarily attributed to the provision of social security benefits, such as Employee Provident Fund (EPF) and medical reimbursement (4.30), effective safety measures (4.30), good welfare activities (4.25), and satisfactory fringe benefits (4.18).

Moreover, BJMP personnel reported a good quality of facilities (Mean = 4.12), reflecting that the agency often provides necessary amenities and services to facilitate work tasks. This is largely due to the implementation of good safety measures (4.30), satisfactory fringe benefits (4.25), good welfare activities (4.15), and adequate transportation facilities (3.65).

Finally, BFP personnel also reported a good quality of facilities (Mean = 4.06), suggesting that the agency regularly provides the required amenities and services to assist employees. The finding is primarily attributed to good safety measures (4.30), good welfare activities (4.15), adequate transportation facilities (3.65), and the provision of social security benefits, such as EPF and medical reimbursement (3.70).

4.1.7. Job satisfaction and job security of uniformed tri-bureau personnel

The study found that the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) has the highest levels of job satisfaction and job security (Mean = 4.44), followed by the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) (Mean = 4.38), and the Philippine National Police (PNP) (Mean = 4.23). According to Rivaldo et al. (2020), job satisfaction encompasses both positive and negative emotions tied to one's employment, while Amin (2021) highlights that high job satisfaction boosts confidence and enthusiasm among employees. Ali and Anwar (2021) further suggest that when employees feel respected and satisfied in their work environment, it reflects good treatment and workplace culture.

Further, BJMP personnel reported excellent job satisfaction and job security (Mean = 4.44), indicating a highly favorable perception of work conditions, job design, and support from managers and colleagues. This is primarily attributed to their comfort and satisfaction with their job (4.63), the agency's strong presence in protecting employees' interests (4.55), job security (4.35), and fair earnings compared to employees in other agencies (4.30).

On the other hand, BFP personnel also reported excellent job satisfaction and job security (Mean = 4.38). This suggests a highly favorable perception of their work conditions, job design, and managerial support. Key contributing factors include job satisfaction (4.53), job security (4.40), fair earnings compared to those in other agencies (4.33), and job conditions that allow for optimal productivity (4.30).

Finally, PNP personnel reported excellent job satisfaction and job security (Mean = 4.23), reflecting a very favorable view of their work conditions and managerial support. This is primarily attributed to job conditions conducive to optimal productivity (4.28), fair earnings compared to similar work in other agencies (4.28), overall job satisfaction (4.18), and satisfaction with the job rotation procedure (4.15).

4.1.8. Autonomy of work of uniformed tri-bureau personnel

Among the three law enforcement agencies in the selected local government units in the Cotabato Province, the study uncovered that the Philippine National Police (PNP) exhibits the highest level of work autonomy (Mean = 4.11), followed by the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) (Mean = 3.81), and the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP)

(Mean = 3.60). According to Müller and Niessen (2019), job autonomy fosters a creative and independent work environment where employees can make decisions and employ self-leadership strategies such as self-goal setting and visualizing success, ultimately leading to greater ownership of their work tasks.

Further, PNP personnel reported a good quality of autonomy at work (Mean = 4.11). This finding suggests a high degree of independence in performing tasks without the need for constant assistance from managers or colleagues. Contributing factors include the agency offering a flexi-time option (4.23), a balance between objectives and resources (4.23), manageable work-related stress (4.15), and the option to perform parts of the job remotely (3.70).

On the other hand, BJMP personnel also reported a good quality of autonomy at work (Mean = 3.81), indicating a strong sense of independence in task execution. Key factors include the ability to use skills and abilities in their work (4.45), a balance between objectives and resources (4.03), the option to perform some tasks at home (3.50), and moderate levels of work-related stress (3.13).

Finally, BFP personnel reported a good quality of autonomy at work (Mean = 3.60), reflecting high independence in task performance. The main contributing factors are the ability to utilize their skills and abilities (4.30), a balance between objectives and resources (4.15), the option to work remotely for part of the job (3.43), and a lower perception of work-related stress (1.78).

4.1.9. Adequacy of resources as perceived by the uniformed tri-bureau personnel

The study assessed that the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) has the highest rating for adequacy of resources (Mean = 4.44), followed by the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) (Mean = 4.33), and the Philippine National Police (PNP) (Mean = 4.27). According to Krisdwi Putri and Handayani (2022), the success of any project hinges on having the appropriate resources in place, which should align with the project's objectives and encompass materials, time, manpower, and information.

Further, the study revealed that BFP uniformed personnel experience excellent availability of resources at work (Mean = 4.44). This rating indicates that essential materials and communication channels are consistently accessible to support employees in achieving organizational objectives. Key factors contributing to this finding include well-defined channels for effective information exchange (4.48), adequate resources provided by the agency to enhance performance (4.43), and satisfactory communication and information flow between departments (4.43).

On the other hand, the study indicated that BJMP uniformed personnel also experience excellent availability of resources at work (Mean = 4.33). This finding suggests that the necessary materials and communication channels are readily available to assist employees in meeting organizational goals. The primary contributors to this rating include satisfactory communication and information flow between departments (4.48), the agency's provision of resources to facilitate performance (4.35), and well-defined channels for effective information exchange (4.18).

Finally, the research showed that PNP uniformed personnel experience excellent availability of resources at work (Mean = 4.27). This rating reflects the consistent availability of materials and communication channels essential for achieving organizational objectives. The contributing factors for this finding include the agency providing resources to enhance performance (4.28), satisfactory communication and information flow between departments (4.28), and well-defined channels for effective information exchange (4.25).

4.1.10. Overall quality of work life of uniformed tri-bureau personnel

Table 1 presents the quality of work life of the tri-bureau uniformed personnel in Kabacan and Kidapawan City, Cotabato Province. The study ascertained that the respondents enjoy a good quality of work life as indicated by a mean score of 4.18. This implies that the various domains of quality of work life, comprising work environment, organizational culture and climate, relationships and cooperation, training and development, compensation and rewards, facilities, job satisfaction and job security, autonomy of work, and adequacy of resources were manifested or observed in a majority of the cases.

The findings further suggest a supportive social and professional environment, facilitating effective interaction and coordination among employees. Notably, the jail officers in the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) exhibited the highest QWL (4.26) among the three agencies, followed closely by the firemen in the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) (4.19). In contrast, the policemen in the Philippine National Police (PNP) reported a lower QWL (4.10), indicating that BFP personnel experience a better quality of work life than their counterparts in the PNP.

Bagtasos (2011) emphasized that while individual characteristics significantly influence perceptions of QWL, organizations often gauge QWL through employee satisfaction metrics. This process involves identifying and measuring specific variables that accurately reflect the work environment and resonate with employees' experiences. In essence, an organization's ability to align its offerings with the needs and expectations of its workforce plays a crucial role in determining QWL, thereby enhancing overall employee satisfaction.

Moreover, Jabeen et al. (2018) found a strong positive correlation between QWL and job satisfaction among Emirati women working in various public sector organizations in the United Arab Emirates. These findings underscore the critical importance of QWL in boosting employee morale and job satisfaction within this specific context.

The BJMP's exemplary QWL rating of is attributed to several key factors: exceptional training and development (4.58), high levels of job satisfaction and security (4.44), competitive compensation and rewards (4.41), adequate resources (4.33), positive relationships and cooperation among colleagues (4.28), quality facilities (4.22), a supportive work environment (4.22), a favorable organizational culture and climate (4.22), and a moderate level of autonomy at work (3.81).

On the other hand, the factors contributing to the good quality of life of the BFP include exceptional adequacy of resources (4.44), ample training and development opportunities (4.38), high levels of job satisfaction and security (4.38), competitive compensation and rewards (4.33), a supportive work environment (4.28), positive relationships and cooperation among colleagues (4.28), and satisfactory facilities (4.06). The BFP's organizational culture and climate rated at 3.95, and autonomy at work scored 3.60.

Lastly, although the PNP personnel reported a good quality of work life, it was assessed that the Philippine National Police (PNP) had the lowest QWL score among the three agencies. Factors contributing to this assessment included exceptional training and development (4.28), adequacy of resources (4.27), quality facilities (4.26), job satisfaction and security (4.23), autonomy in work (4.20), positive relationships and cooperation (4.18), competitive compensation and rewards (4.08), a less favorable work environment (3.73), and an organizational culture and climate rating of 3.69.

A good Quality of Work Life (QWL) among law enforcement personnel directly enhances public service delivery and civic engagement by fostering job satisfaction, motivation, and professional dedication. This includes their attitudes and behaviors, emphasizing the importance of their role in bringing about social change within communities (Fulleros & Nitafan, 2024). When personnel experience favorable working conditions, strong organizational support, and opportunities for personal and professional growth, they are more likely to perform their duties effectively and with a higher level of commitment. This, in turn, builds trust and collaboration with the community, encourages active civic engagement, and ensures more efficient and responsive public service delivery, ultimately contributing to safer and more cohesive societies.

Table 1

Overall Quality of Work Life of the Tri-Bureau Uniformed Personnel in Selected Municipalities in the Cotabato Province

Domain	PNP		BFP		BJMP		Overall	
	M	DL	M	DL	M	DL	M	DL
Work Environment	3.73	A	4.28	SA	4.22	A	4.07	A
Organization Culture and Climate	3.69	A	3.95	SA	4.12	A	3.90	A
Relation And Cooperation	4.18	A	4.28	SA	4.28	SA	4.25	SA
Training And Development	4.28	SA	4.38	SA	4.58	SA	4.41	SA
Compensation and Rewards	4.08	A	4.33	SA	4.41	SA	4.27	SA
Facilities	4.26	SA	4.06	A	4.12	A	4.14	A
Job Satisfaction and Job Security	4.23	SA	4.38	SA	4.44	SA	4.35	SA
Autonomy Of Work	4.20	SA	3.60	A	3.81	A	3.83	A
Adequacy Of Resources	4.27	SA	4.44	SA	4.33	SA	4.34	SA
Quality of Work Life of Tri-Bureau Uniformed Personnel	4.10	A	4.19	A	4.26	SA		

Source. The construct's dimensionality was derived from the framework of "Quality of work life: Scale development and validation" by D. R. Swamy, T. S. Nanjundeswaraswamy, and S. Rashmi, 2015, *International Journal of Caring Sciences*, 8(2), pp. 281-300. While the mean score interpretation followed the guidelines of "Predictors of organizational citizenship behavior among government personnel: A structural equation modeling approach" by R. P. Nitafan, and F. M. Idris, 2024, *Masyarakat, Kebudayaan & Politik*, 37(3), pp. 313-328

4.2. Significant difference in the quality of work life of the tri-bureau uniformed personnel when analyzed according to their organizational membership

Table two presents the test of difference in the quality of work life of Tri-Bureau uniformed personnel based on their organizational membership. The study determined a significant difference in the quality of work life across the Tri-Bureau agencies, as indicated by a p-value of .001, leading to the rejection of the first null hypothesis.

A 2022 study by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) supports the finding, noting that the quality of work life varies by rank, position, assignment, and location within the Tri-Bureau. Higher-ranking personnel generally enjoy a better quality of work life due to higher salaries, better benefits, and more advancement opportunities. Conversely, those in more demanding roles, such as counter-insurgency, firefighting, or working in high-security prisons, as well as those stationed in remote or underdeveloped areas, often experience a lower quality of work life due to harsh working conditions and limited resources.

Table 2

Significant Difference in the Quality of Work Life of the Tri-Bureau Uniformed Personnel

	Mean rank	p-value	Interpretation	Decision
BFP	67.94	0.001	Significant	Do not Accept Ho1
BJMP	73.21			
PNP	40.35			

Source. The interpretation of statistical hypothesis results follows the framework of “Interpreting results from statistical hypothesis testing: Understanding the appropriate P-value” by E. Tsushima, 2022, *Physical Therapy Research*, 25(2), pp. 49-55

5. Conclusions & recommendations

The study revealed a significant difference in the quality of work life among the Tri-Bureau Uniformed Personnel based on their organizational membership. Specifically, personnel from the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) reported experiencing an excellent quality of work life compared to their counterparts in the other agencies. In contrast, the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) demonstrated a superior quality of work life relative to the Philippine National Police (PNP). These findings highlight the varying perceptions of work-life across different organizations and underscore the need for targeted improvements.

To enhance the quality of work life for the respondents and address the limitations identified in the study, several recommendations are proposed for the respective agencies. First and foremost, the Philippine National Police should focus on improving the work environment, organizational culture, and climate for their uniformed personnel. These areas were identified as the weakest links in terms of quality of work life. Key actions to address these shortcomings include upgrading facilities and resources to create a safer and more comfortable workspace. Furthermore, promoting a positive organizational culture through team-building exercises and leadership development programs is essential. Additionally, enhancing the organizational climate by resolving communication issues and increasing job satisfaction will significantly contribute to a more favorable work environment.

Moreover, BFP should prioritize enhancing work autonomy, organizational culture, and climate to improve the quality of work life among its personnel. Increasing work autonomy by providing greater decision-making power and flexibility in roles can lead to higher levels of job satisfaction and performance. In addition, fostering a supportive and collaborative organizational culture, while addressing work-life balance and managing work demands, will cultivate a more positive and effective work environment. By implementing these strategies, the Bureau of Fire Protection can facilitate improved employee morale and productivity.

In addition, BJMP must focus on enhancing work autonomy, organizational culture, and climate, as these indicators were found to be the lowest among the three agencies. To achieve this, it is crucial to enhance work autonomy by granting personnel greater control over their tasks and schedules. Furthermore, developing a respectful and supportive organizational culture through leadership training and mentorship programs will contribute to improved job satisfaction. Regular evaluations of the factors affecting the work climate should also be conducted to ensure ongoing improvements. General recommendations include implementing regular assessments through surveys and feedback mechanisms, investing in professional development opportunities, enhancing communication channels to address personnel concerns, and promoting work-life balance through flexible policies and wellness programs.

Further, the researchers emphasize the importance of considering how special needs, such as physical, sensory, intellectual, and psychosocial disabilities, impact the experiences and well-being of uniformed personnel. To this end, future research should explore the specific challenges faced by personnel with special needs, including barriers to accessibility, health-related concerns, and potential stigmatization within the workplace. Insights into these experiences can inform the development of targeted interventions, such as accessible workspaces, adaptive technologies, mental health support services, and inclusive training programs. Addressing these needs will help cultivate a more inclusive and supportive work environment, ultimately enhancing job satisfaction, boosting morale, and improving overall organizational effectiveness.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge that the scope of the study was limited to assessing the significant differences in the quality of work life among tri-bureau uniformed personnel in Kabacan and Kidapawan City, Cotabato Province. To address the limitations of this research, future scholars are encouraged to consider several avenues for further investigation. First, comparing the quality of work life among tri-bureau uniformed personnel in other municipalities and cities would provide a broader perspective on how these specific agencies measure up against other local government units. Additionally, expanding the research area to encompass a larger geographic region, such as the entire SOCCSKSARGEN Region, would enhance the generalizability of the findings. Lastly, incorporating additional factors into future studies, including social integration, the nature of work, autonomy and freedom, interesting and satisfying work, and fair compensation, would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the quality of work life in various organizational contexts.

SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTION

The manuscript clearly identifies a research gap; the manuscript extends or refines existing theories; the manuscript proposes a new theoretical or analytical model; the manuscript provides new datasets or empirical evidence; the manuscript presents statistically and practically significant findings; the manuscript offers policy/managerial/technological implications; the manuscript opens new directions for further research.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

CRedit: **Thaleanna Alon Yap**: Validation, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Resources, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft, Writing - Review & Editing, Visualization; **Rowell Pagod Nitafan**: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software, Supervision, Project Administration.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest related to the conduct and publication of this research.

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