Level of Curfew Hour Implementation and Public Safety and Law Enforcement in Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this enlightening study, in which your participation was crucial, was to determine the level of curfew hour implementation and its impact on public safety and law enforcement in Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental. Maria, Davao Occidental. Using a descriptive-correlational research design, we delved into the respondents' demographic profile, the level of curfew hour implementation, the status of public safety and law enforcement, and the significant relationship between curfew hour implementation and public safety and law enforcement.

There were 379 respondents from Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental, was included in the study. An adapted research questionnaire from the International Journal of English, Literature and Social Sciences (2020) and the Office of the Community Oriented Policing Services (2014) was utilized. We used statistical tools like frequency and percentage, mean, and a type of analysis called Spearman's correlation, which helps us understand the relationship between two variables, specifically curfew hour implementation and public safety and law enforcement.

The findings revealed that the majority of the respondents were aged 16–18 years, female (50.1%), and Grade 12 (31.9%). The effectiveness of curfew

hour implementation was moderately implemented, with a grand mean of 3.48. The level of public safety and law enforcement implementation was 3.68, indicating good status. Performance, as an indicator of public safety and law enforcement, received the highest mean of 3.73, implying better performance by the law enforcement agency in the community.

There was a significant relationship between curfew hour implementation and public safety and law enforcement. The study provides a broader understanding to the community, Local Government Units, and law enforcement officers on the importance of maintaining peace and order by intensifying curfew hour implementation.

INTRODUCTION

Various crimes happen in every society. The Philippines has a moderately high rate of crime, violence, and terrorism. In 2020, the country was ranked in the bottom five of the Asia Pacific region's order and security rating. Poorer neighborhoods and locations with larger populations and higher unemployment rates experienced higher crime rates (Statista, 2019). Sutton et al. (2008), as cited by Choi (2013), stated that crime is a major contemporary issue, impacting many lives. Serious crimes against persons and property cause considerable fear within the community. Robbery, abduction, gang conflicts among teenagers, drug trafficking, "akyat-bahay," vehicle napping, riding-in-tandem, extrajudicial killing, rape, and other illegal actions are most commonly committed at night. Many of these crimes are attributed to street teenagers (Galabin et al., 2018).

Curfew, or setting limitations on individual movement within specific areas and times, is considered an effective strategy for reducing crime rates, victimization, and criminal schemes (Sparrow, 2016). It restricts public activity during specific hours and may require businesses to close during these times, aiming to deter crime, prevent victimization, and protect children (Shiva Kumar et al., 2017). Curfews are established by local government units and adapted to each municipality's needs. Officials consider curfews a credible and effective community-based remedy for adolescent crime (Reynolds, 2015).

In the Philippines, the Philippine National Police regard curfews for minors—along with penalties for guardians of violators—as strong deterrents to crimes involving juveniles (Infante, 2017). Such policies reportedly reduce crime rates and the number of crimes committed by minors, as local authorities strictly implement these rules. Studies (McDowall et al., 2000; Kline, 2010) show significant declines in crimes like robbery and assault following curfew law enforcement.

This study seeks to determine the effectiveness of curfew hour implementation in Sta. Maria, concerning public safety and law enforcement, aims to provide insights better to protect individuals, especially minors, from crime.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to determine the level of curfew hour implementation and public safety and law enforcement in Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental. Specifically, it sought to:

1. Determine the socio-demographic profile of respondents in terms of:
   1.1 Gender;
   1.2 Age, and
       1.3 Grade level.
2. Assess the level of curfew hour implementation in Sta. Maria.
3. Assess the level of public safety and law enforcement in Sta. Maria, in terms of:
   3.1 Community involvement;
   3.2 Public safety;
   3.3 Procedural justice;
   3.4 Performance; and
   3.5 Contact and satisfaction.
4. Identify the significant relationship between curfew hour implementation and public safety and law enforcement in Sta. Maria.

Significance of the Study

The results are envisioned to benefit:

- Local Government Unit: Providing data to officials and employees on youth violating curfew hours and possible associations with crime, thus helping in guiding and monitoring for a safe community.
- Police Outpost and Other Agencies: Helping police and regulatory agencies in policy formulation to improve curfew systems and prevent youth from involvement in criminality and misbehavior.
- Parents: Assisting parents in evaluating curfew's role in child protection and public safety.
- Students: Increasing awareness and understanding of curfew implementation, its effects, and significance in preventing victimization and ensuring protection.
- Our study is not just a culmination of our efforts, but also a stepping stone for future researchers. The findings of this study can serve as valuable reference material for further studies on related topics, inspiring and guiding future research in this field.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Locale

The study was conducted in Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental, a municipality with a land area of 175.00km² (8.09% of Davao Occidental's total). The sample comprised 379 minors (aged 18 or below) from a total population of 6,586, residing in three barangays: Basiawan, San Agustin, and Poblacion.

Research Design

Our research design was meticulously crafted, employing a correlational approach to examine the relationship between curfew hour implementation and public safety and law enforcement. In simpler terms, we focused on describing relationships rather than establishing causality, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.

Sampling Method

A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure all minors had an equal opportunity to participate. The Slovin formula determined the sample size. The study ensured only residents of the three specified barangays were included. Due to the participants' status as minors, parental consent was obtained.
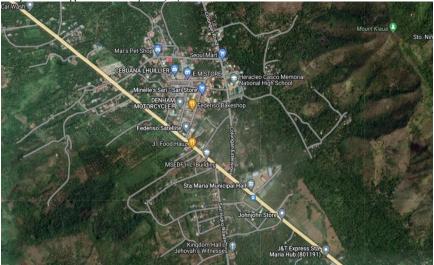
Figure 2
Map Showing the Municipality of Sta. Maria.

Table 1. *Distribution of Respondents*

LOCATION	TOTAL POPULATION	SAMPLE SIZE
BASIAWAN	2,664	153
POBLACION	2,479	142
SAN AGUSTIN	1,441	84
TOTAL	6,584	379

Research Instrument

The researcher utilized an adapted research questionnaire from the International Journal of English, Literature and Social Sciences (2020) and the Community Survey on Public Safety and Law Enforcement, developed by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (2014), with support from ICF International and law enforcement experts. The instrument was administered to 379 minors aged 18 years old and below.

The questionnaire consisted of two main categories:
1. Level of Curfew Hour Implementation:
   - Assessed by 10 questions about the curfew practices enforced by the Municipality of Sta. Maria.
2. Level of Public Safety and Law Enforcement:
   - Covered by multiple indicators, each with five questions:
     - Community involvement
     - Safety
     - Procedural justice
     - Performance
     - Contact and satisfaction (total of 2 items)

All items were rated using a 5-point Likert scale, allowing respondents to indicate their level of agreement or experience for each indicator.

Data Analysis

To assess the level of curfew hour implementation and public safety and law enforcement, the study employed a 5-point Likert scale as the primary tool for quantitative analysis. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, and means, were calculated for each indicator.

Table 2. *Parameter Limit on the Level of Curfew Hour Implementation*

RANGE OF MEANS	DESCRIPTIVE EQUIVALENT	INTERPRETATION
4.21 – 5.00	Very High	This indicates the level of curfew ordinance is fully implemented.
3.41 – 4.20	High	This indicates the level of curfew ordinance is moderately implemented.
2.61 – 3.40	Neutral	This indicates the level of curfew ordinance is fairly implemented.
1.81 – 2.60	Low	This indicates the level of curfew ordinance is rarely implemented.
1.00 – 1.80	Very Low	This indicates the curfew ordinance is poorly implemented.

Table 3. *Parameter Limit on the Level of Public Safety and Law Enforcement Implementation*

RANGE OF MEANS	DESCRIPTIVE EQUIVALENT	INTERPRETATION
4.21 – 5.00	Very High	This means that the level of public safety and law enforcement is in excellent condition.
3.41 – 4.20	High	This means that the level of public safety and law enforcement is satisfactory.
2.61 – 3.40	Moderate	This means that the level of public safety and law enforcement is at an average status.
1.81 – 2.60	Low	This means that the level of public safety and law enforcement is in poor condition.
1.00 – 1.80	Very Low	This means that the level of public safety and law enforcement is in a poor state.

Data Gathering Procedure

The following steps were employed to gather pertinent data for the study:

An endorsement letter, noted by the Program Head of the Bachelor of Science in Criminology and endorsed by the Dean of the Institute of Human Service, was obtained to formally begin the research.

Letters were sent to the Barangay offices of San Agustin, Basiawan, and Poblacion to request permission to conduct the study in these areas.

Respondents were oriented on the details and scope of the research

investigation.

Each respondent received and completed an informed consent form, confirming both their willingness to participate and their understanding of their roles and rights as research participants.

The research instrument was then distributed, and subsequently retrieved after completion by the respondents.

The collected data were thoroughly evaluated and analyzed using appropriate statistical tools.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile

Age

Table 4 presents the descriptive results of the respondents' age profile. The results indicate that the most significant proportion of respondents—approximately 45.1%—were aged 16–18, representing the highest percentage among all age groups. Conversely, the age group 10–12 had the lowest representation, accounting for 18.2% of respondents. These findings suggest that the majority of participants in the study were in the 16–18 age bracket.

Table 4. *Age Profile of the Respondents*

Age	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
10-12	68	18.2%
13-15	139	36.7%
16-18	172	45.1%
Total	379	100%

Gender

The gender profile of the respondents is shown in Table 5. Based on the table, 44.3 percent of respondents were male, 50.1 percent were female, and 5.5 percent identified as LGBT. It indicates that there were more female than male minors in the three Barangays in Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental. According to the Sta. Maria Statistics Office, Sta. Maria has a higher female minor population compared to males.

Table 5. *Gender Profile of the Respondents*

GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Male Female LGBT	167	44.3%
	191	50.1%
	21	5.5%
Total	379	100%

Grade Level

The descriptive results of the respondent's grade level are shown in Table 6. According to the table, the highest percentage of enrolled students was 31.9 percent in Grade 12, while the lowest percentage of respondents was 6.3 percent in Grade 7. This indicates that the majority of respondents who were involved in or experienced curfew hour implementation were in Grade 12.

Table 6. *Grade Level of the Respondents*

GRADE LEVEL	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
5	26	7.1%
6	30	7.9%
7	24	6.3%
8	26	6.9%
9	55	14.5%
10	56	14.5%
11	42	10.8%
12	120	31.9%
Total	379	100%

Level of Curfew Hour Implementation

Table 7 presents the level of curfew hour implementation. The results indicate that Item Number 10 obtained the highest mean score of 3.94 (High), which states that there was peace and order in the barangay upon the implementation of the curfew ordinance, making the people feel safe and secure. Conversely, Item Number 4 received the lowest mean score of 2.75 (Moderate), suggesting that only a few respondents in the barangay were attempting to violate the curfew ordinance. Overall, the findings show that due to the curfew hour implementation, peace and order in Barangay Poblacion were established correctly. Moreover, a grand mean of 3.48 (High) was computed for all items, indicating that the curfew hour implementation was moderately effective within the target areas.

Table 7. *Level of Curfew Hours Implementation*

ITEMS	MEAN	INTERPRETATION
1. I have encountered a Barangay Tanod during their foot patrol to implement the curfew ordinance	3.79	High
2. I have experience staying up late and roaming at Barangay to be "happy-happy".	3.15	Moderate
3. I have tried to embolden other juveniles to stay up late outside and violate the curfew ordinance of the Barangay.	2.76	Moderate
4. I have tried to violate the curfew ordinance.	2.75	Moderate
5. I have been discouraged from roaming outside and staying up late because of the said curfew ordinance.	3.43	High
6. I have observed that the Barangay officials conduct an information drive to disseminate information and provisions of the curfew ordinance.	3.63	High
7. I have observed that consistency is present in the implementation of the curfew ordinance of the Barangay.	3.73	High
8. I have observed that the Barangay Police security officers consistently patrol in their respective areas of responsibility within the Barangay.	3.76	High
9. I have observed peace and order in Barangay upon the	3.89	High

Level of Public Safety and Law Enforcement in Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental

Table 8 presents the level of public safety and law enforcement in Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental, as measured across several domains.

The results reveal that the Performance domain obtained the highest category mean of 3.73 (High), indicating that the law enforcement agency demonstrates effective performance in enforcing laws within the community. In contrast, the Contact and Satisfaction domain recorded the lowest category mean of 3.57 (High), which implies that there are still communication and engagement links between the community and the law enforcement agency, although there is room for improvement. According to Ellis & Dietz (2017), police officers who are familiar with their communities can better deploy resources, avoid violent situations, and collaborate with community partners for long-term safety improvements.

Community Involvement

Within this domain, Item 1 achieved the highest mean score of 3.77 (High), suggesting improved relationships between the law enforcement agency and the community. Conversely, Item 3 obtained the lowest mean score of 3.61 (High), indicating that while the community can share inputs with law enforcement, there are still challenges in doing so easily. Badiora & Ntamark (2020) note that police agencies depend on community support and cooperation to "protect and serve," yet such relationships are not always harmonious. Tondo et al. (2020) further emphasize that community-oriented policing involves collaboration between citizens and police to address circumstances that encourage crime.

Safety

In terms of safety, Item 6 received the highest mean of 3.92 (High), reflecting a strong sense of daytime security in the community. Item 7, with a mean of 3.50 (High), scored lowest in this domain, though it still indicates that nighttime safety—particularly during curfew hours—is present. Many governments prioritize policies that safeguard people's physical well-being, focusing on crime reduction and hiring law enforcement and emergency responders (Barthelemy, 2016). Villarica (2011), referencing Maslow's hierarchy of needs, points out that physical safety from violence is a foremost concern.

Procedural Justice

For procedural justice, Item 14 obtained the highest mean of 3.78 (Good Status), suggesting strong trust between the community and the law enforcement agency. On the other hand, Item 1 had the lowest mean of 3.66 (High), still indicating fair treatment of community members by law enforcement. Procedural justice focuses on the quality of interactions between police and the public, which impacts perceptions of legitimacy, willingness to obey the law, and crime rates (Antrobus et al., 2018). Hoyle & Batchelor (2018) emphasize that fair treatment is associated with procedures yielding accurate and unbiased outcomes, while Murphy & McPherson (2022) argue that it strengthens trust, especially among those who feel less stigmatized.

Performance

In the performance domain, Item 20 obtained the highest mean of 4.02 (High), highlighting the effectiveness of law enforcement presence in crime prevention and maintaining peace and order in the barangay. Item 19, with the lowest mean of 3.54 (High), still indicates that police presence contributes positively to community safety. A survey by Ruddell & Connor (2022) noted that rural residents are generally less likely than urban residents to rate their police highly in law enforcement effectiveness, responsiveness, crime prevention, community safety, and cooperation.

Contact and Satisfaction

Finally, in the contact and satisfaction domain, Item 21 scored the highest at 3.79 (High), reflecting a high level of satisfaction with interactions between the community and law enforcement. The lowest mean in this domain, 3.44 (High) for Item 24, suggests that even non-emergency contact with law enforcement still occurs, but can be further improved. According to Oliviera et al. (2020), interactions between police and citizens are key opportunities for building trust and updating beliefs about the legitimacy of legal institutions. Positive police-community relations are essential for obtaining vital information on suspicious or criminal activities, as well as for witnesses' cooperation (Chow, 2011). Studies also show that respectful and neutral treatment results in higher trust, stronger perceptions of legitimacy, and greater satisfaction with law enforcement (Fagan & Piquero, 2007; Mazerolle et al., 2013; Rosenbaum et al., 2015).

Table 8. *Level of Public Safety and Law Enforcement in Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental*

ITEMS	MEAN	INTERPRETATION
1. To what extent does the law enforcement agency develop relationships with community members (e.g., residents, organizations, and groups)?	3.77	High
2. To what extent does the law enforcement agency regularly communicate with community members (e.g., social media, website, emails, or public meetings)?	3.65	High
3. To what extent does the law enforcement agency make it easy for community members to provide input (e.g., comments, suggestions, and concerns)?	3.61	High
4. To what extent does the law enforcement agency work together with community members to solve local problems?	3.67	High
5. To what extent do you think the law enforcement agency practices community policing?	3.74	High
Community Involvement Mean	3.69	High
6. To what extent do you feel safe in your community when you are outside alone during the day?	3.92	High
7. To what extent do you feel safe in your community when you are outside alone at night?	3.5	High
8. To what extent do you feel safe when you are inside your house during the night?	3.81	High

9. Over the last 12 months, to what extent have your feelings of safety in your community increased, decreased, or stayed the same?	3.62	High
10. Is child abuse, gang activity, and prostitution the most significant problem in your community?	3.67	High
Safety Mean	3.7	High
11. To what extent do officers in the law enforcement agency treat people fairly?	3.66	High
12. To what extent do officers in the law enforcement agency show concern for community members?	3.68	High
13. To what extent are officers in the law enforcement agency respectful?	3.7	High
14. To what extent do you trust the law enforcement agency?	3.78	High
15. If you had contact with an officer in the past 12 months, to what extent did the officer sufficiently explain his or her actions and procedures?	3.71	High
Procedural Justice Mean	3.71	High
16. To what extent is the law enforcement agency effective at proactively preventing crime?	3.83	High
17. To what extent does the law enforcement agency address the problems that concern you?	3.63	High
18. To what extent are you satisfied with the overall performance of the law enforcement agency?	3.63	High
19. To what extent do you feel there is a strong enough police presence in your community?	3.54	High
20. Do you think the law enforcement agency is effective at preventing crime?	4.02	High
Performance Mean	3.73	High
21. To what extent are you satisfied with your interactions with the law enforcement agency for general contacts?	3.79	High
22. To what extent are you satisfied with your interactions with the law enforcement agency for non-emergency calls?	3.6	High
23. In the past 12 months, how many times have you had contact with the law enforcement agency for 911 emergency calls?	3.5	High

24. In the past 12 months, how many times have you had contact with the law enforcement agency for non-emergency calls (e.g., to report a crime or suspicious activity)?	3.44	High
25. In the past 12 months, how many times have you had contact with the law enforcement agency for other purposes (e.g., attending a community meeting or talking to an officer on patrol)?	3.52	High
Contact and Satisfaction Mean	3.57	High
Grand Mean	3.68	High

Correlation Analysis of Curfew Hour Implementation and Public Safety and Law Enforcement in Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental

Table 9 presents the analysis of the relationship between curfew hour implementation and public safety and law enforcement in Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental. The computed r-value of 0.598 indicates a moderate correlation, while the p-value of <0.001 provides sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. This result signifies a statistically significant relationship between curfew hour implementation and public safety and law enforcement in Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental. In other words, the effectiveness of enforced curfew hours is significantly linked to improvements in public safety and law enforcement within the community.

Supporting literature highlights multiple perspectives regarding curfews. According to Reynolds (2015), curfews benefit law enforcement by granting officers greater control over juveniles' behavior and presence. Conversely, Kline (2011) notes that parents and authorities sometimes use curfews to curb youth delinquency, but may foster a false sense of security. When parents strictly enforce curfews, teens may avoid punishment yet miss out on opportunities for self-assertion, learning, and negotiating with their parents to manage real-life challenges. Youth raised under strict curfews may become less adaptable and could experience cultural shock.

Overall, the findings suggest that while curfew hours contribute positively to public safety and enforcement, considerations must also be given to the broader social impact on youth development and autonomy.

Table 9. *Correlation Analysis of Curfew Hour Implementation and Public Safety and Law Enforcement in Sta. Maria*

Particulars	r-Value	Description	p-Value	Decision
Curfew Hour Implementation and Public Safety and Law Enforcement	0.598*	Moderate Correlation	<0.001	Reject the null hypothesis

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

SUMMARY

The study examined the level of curfew hour implementation and public safety and law enforcement in Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental, is using a descriptive correlational research design. A total of 379 minors aged 10–18 years old from selected barangays in Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental, participated as a respondent. The research utilized an adapted questionnaire from the International Journal of English, Literature, and Social Sciences (2020) and the Office of the Community Oriented Policing Services (2014). Statistical tools employed included Frequency and Percentage, Mean, and Spearman's Correlation Analysis.

Findings revealed that the majority of respondents were 16–18 years old (45.1%), female (50.1%), and enrolled in Grade 12 (31.9%). The curfew hour implementation received a grand mean of 3.48, indicating a high level of effectiveness. The level of public safety and law enforcement recorded a grand mean of 3.68, indicating a high level. Furthermore, the correlation analysis yielded a p-value of <0.001, denoting a significant relationship between curfew hour implementation and public safety and law enforcement.

CONCLUSION

Based on the study's findings, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. The majority of respondents were female (50.1%), aged 16–18 years (45.1%), and primarily Grade 12 students (31.9%), indicating that females and older minors predominantly participated.

2. The implementation of curfew hours in Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental, was found to be moderately effective, with a mean of 3.48, suggesting positive results but highlighting areas for improvement.

3. Public safety and law enforcement in the community were rated with a grand mean of 3.68, signifying beneficial contributions to communal well-being and the need for ongoing enhancement.

4. There is a statistically significant relationship between curfew hour implementation and public safety and law enforcement (p-value <0.001), demonstrating that effective curfew regulations have notably contributed to peace and security in Sta. Maria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Local Government Unit should organize seminars and orientation programs to educate minors and parents about curfew policies, rules, and regulations, increasing awareness and compliance. Information drives targeting ordinance violators, including pre-service community programs such as tree planting and clean-up drives, are also recommended to foster discipline.
2. Police outposts, barangay officials, and related agencies should develop effective schedules for patrolling prior to and during curfew hours to optimize resources and maintain peace and order.
3. Parents are encouraged to enforce disciplinary actions regarding their children's behavior during curfew hours to reduce crimes and juvenile-related issues.
4. Students must be familiarized with curfew laws and ordinances, including their purpose, implementation, significance, and acceptance in the community. Such knowledge could help students appreciate the importance of law, value safety, and avoid victimization.
5. Further studies are recommended to address remaining claims and gaps identified in the research.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

DECLARATION OF REGENERATIVE AI

Artificial Intelligence was utilized solely for proofreading purposes to enhance grammar and check for misspelled words.

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