(RESEARCH ARTICLE)

Secure at all cost: An assessment of the competencies of southern police district task group diplomatic

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Abstract

The study assessed the competency levels of the Southern Police District Task Group Diplomatic across embassies, residences, and schools, in terms of; knowledge of work, training, physical and mental capabilities, and work etiquette. This is important to address the gaps in implementing protective security for the diplomatic corps, Embassy, and residence of diplomats in the Philippines. Using the descriptive method, data was gathered using an online survey questionnaire among one hundred fifty (150) personnel. The result indicates that embassy personnel demonstrated higher competency levels compared to those stationed at residences and schools. It was further discovered the significant differences in the competency assessments of the three groups of respondents—embassies, residences, and schools. These differences highlight that each group faces distinct challenges. The frequency of problems encountered varied across the key areas related to inadequate knowledge of work and ineffective training, Problems with physical and mental capabilities were also noted, Work etiquette was less frequent. Significant differences were observed in the frequency of problems encountered by the three respondent groups, indicating that each group faces unique operational challenges. Based on the study findings, a set of targeted policy recommendations has been proposed to bolster the competency of the Southern Police District Task Group Diplomatic. The study contributes to identifying their strengths and areas for improvement, enabling them to enhance their competencies in providing security and diplomatic protection within their Jurisdiction.

Keywords: Assessment; Competencies; Descriptive Method; Policy Recommendation; Task Group Diplomatic.

1. Introduction

The functions of the Philippine National Police are law enforcement, and it is vested with the Philippine Constitution and pertinent laws, securing and protecting members of the diplomatic corps, and visiting foreign dignitaries, delegates, and/or participants during special events. They also have responsibility under international law to protect visiting foreign dignitaries and resident foreign diplomats in this country. Visiting foreign dignitaries/diplomats and foreign missions in the Philippines are protected by a wide variety of local and national law enforcement agencies. Protecting officials from harm today no longer means just having a bodyguard, nor is it a simple task of physically shielding the individual from attack. Days or weeks are spent in preparation for a single visit. Thus, the agencies must place qualified personnel and spend months of training to teach these individuals the complicated concepts, methods, and techniques of protective security. The same concepts that apply to protecting our diplomats and residential areas of dignitaries apply to protecting visiting foreign officials and their residences in the Philippines.

The security crisis measures of diplomatic missions, whether internal or external, before or after exposure of risk to natural events such as earthquakes and floods or manmade events in a location for causing security threats, terrorism, and electronic espionage. The employees' job positions and devotion to work with loyalty to their country are the keys to success in achieving diplomatic mission security. Security comes from the inside before being achieved from the

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outside. Working within a one-team spirit mitigates the security risk with proper coordination with the receiving government departments for reporting about any potential emergency that may arise. This proliferates the mutual trust between the guest country and the receiving state in crisis management. The evaluation of maintaining security success is an image of the receiving country's supremacy and the power and wisdom of the procedures taken by the mission of the guest country.

The United States Embassy in the Philippines issued a security alert on Tuesday, January 7, 2020, warning them of security risks. The advisory is the latest in a series of alerts issued by different US embassies around the world following the US' targeted killing of Iran commander Major General Qasem Soleimani. Among the embassies that have issued security alerts are Israel, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Iraq, and Poland. The Philippine National Police and Armed Forces of the Philippines were on the lookout for threats to embassies of Iran, the US, and other embassies. The Southern Police District (SPD) is tasked with creating a diplomatic security unit that provides diplomatic security in all embassies, ambassador residences, and foreign schools in its area of responsibility (AOR) in compliance with the legal obligations on how diplomatic security operations align with legal frameworks, such as international treaties, conventions, and domestic laws, governing the protection of diplomatic missions and personnel. To maintain diplomatic relations by fostering mutual understanding, trust, and confidence in other states. To enhance the capabilities of law enforcement agencies in crisis preparedness and risk mitigation to ensure safety and security in crucial situations. With that, competent diplomatic security personnel possess the necessary skills, knowledge, and abilities to effectively carry out their duties and responsibilities as diplomatic security, and by evaluating their competencies, weaknesses can be identified and addressed through targeted training and development initiatives.

The creation of Task Force Diplomatic was based on the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and Optional Protocols in April 1961. The States Parties to the present Convention acknowledged that peoples of all nations from ancient times have recognized the status of diplomatic agents, having in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations concerning the sovereign equality of states, the maintenance of international peace and security, and the promotion of friendly relations among nations. Believing that an international convention on diplomatic intercourse privileges and immunities would contribute to the development of friendly relations among nations irrespective of their differing constitutional and social systems, realizing that the purpose of such privileges and immunities is not to benefit individuals but to ensure the efficient performance of the functions of diplomatic missions as representing states. Also, it affirms that the rules of customary international law should continue to govern questions not expressly regulated by the provisions of the present Convention. That is why, by the year 2012, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) released a Department Order No. 23-12 of 2012 with the subject: Establishing the Diplomatic Security Unit under the Office of Intelligence and Security (OIS). Its legal basis and justification will spot Article XXII, Section 2 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, which states that "The receiving state is under a special duty to take all appropriate steps to protect the premises of the mission against any intrusion or damage and to prevent any disturbance of the peace of the mission or impairment of its dignity." According to Article XXIX of the same convention, the Philippines as the receiving state is mandated to take all appropriate steps to prevent any attack on the person, freedom, and dignity of a diplomatic agent, and the Department of Foreign Affairs is the agency in government primarily responsible in managing the state's foreign relations and maintaining Philippine representation with foreign governments through their embassies in the country.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

Ensuring the security of diplomatic missions and high-profile individuals is a critical responsibility of the Southern Police District (SPD) Task Group Diplomatic. To effectively measure and enhance their performance, this study, titled "SECURE AT ALL COST: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE COMPETENCIES OF SOUTHERN POLICE DISTRICT TASK GROUP DIPLOMATIC," employs a quantitative research design. Quantitative research is well suited for this purpose as it allows for the precise measurement of various competencies such as knowledge, training, and physical and mental capabilities through structured tools like surveys and statistical analysis (Creswell, 2014). By systematically analyzing these metrics, the study aims to provide a clear assessment of how well the task group fulfills its security duties. The insights gained from this quantitative assessment will help identify strengths and areas for improvement within the SPD Task Group Diplomatic. According to Bryman (2016), quantitative methods offer a vigorous framework for evaluating performance and effectiveness by producing objective, data-driven results. This approach aligns with the goals of the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028, which emphasizes strengthening law enforcement and ensuring public safety. The study's findings will be instrumental in enhancing the Task Group's capabilities and ensuring they meet the high standards required for diplomatic security.

2.1.1. Research Method

The researcher utilized a descriptive-evaluative method of research in which the data were gathered with the mean and frequency distribution, derived from the descriptive presentation of all the variables. Shona McCombes (2019) explains that descriptive research aims to accurately and systematically describe a population, situation, or phenomenon. It can answer what, where, when, and how questions, but not why questions. A descriptive research design can use a wide variety of research methods to investigate one or more variables. Unlike in experimental research, the researcher does not control or manipulate any of the variables but only observes and measures them. On the other hand, Adanza et al. (2009) claimed that the descriptive method of research is designed to gather information on the present conditions, status, and trends and deal with what is prevailing. The study's main objective is to describe the nature of a situation as it exists at the time of the study and to explore the causes of a particular phenomenon.

2.2. Population of the Study

This study utilized non-probability sampling in selecting individual members or a subset of the population where statistical inferences may be made. Non-probability sampling is often associated with case study research design and qualitative research, where the sample of participants or cases does not need to be representative or random, but a clear rationale is needed for the inclusion of some cases or individuals rather than others (Taherdoost, 2016). The decision to use non-probability sampling is grounded in the specific nature of the study, which seeks to assess competencies within the Southern Police District Task Group Diplomatic. The focus on this specific group necessitates a more targeted approach, as random sampling from the general population would not provide relevant or accurate insights into the competencies of individuals in this specialized task force. To further refine the selection process, the study employed simple random sampling and purposeful incidental sampling. Simple random sampling, as defined by Hayes (2021), is a method where each member of a subset of a statistical population has an equal probability of being chosen. This approach was particularly useful in ensuring that every member of the Task Group Diplomatic South had an equal chance of being included in the study, thereby minimizing selection bias and enhancing the reliability of the findings. Purposive-incidental sampling was also used, wherein respondents were chosen based on their specific knowledge of the study and their accessibility. This method was critical in ensuring that the study gathered data from individuals who had relevant experience and insight into the competencies being assessed. By focusing on respondents who are directly involved with or knowledgeable about the operations of the Task Group Diplomatic South, the study was able to obtain more accurate and meaningful data. The demographic profile of the respondents in this study includes their age, gender, highest educational attainment, and rank. This demographic information was collected to understand the diversity within the Task Group Diplomatic South and to analyze if these factors had any influence on the competencies assessed. This demographic profile provides a framework for analyzing the different perspectives of the respondents and understanding how their backgrounds influence their views on the competencies and performance of the Southern Police District Task Group Diplomatic.

Table 1 Classification of Respondents

Respondents	Sample Size	Percentage
Police Commission Officer (PCO)	50	33.33…
Philippine National Police (PNP) in Diplomat	50	33.33…
Security Guard (SG)	50	33.33…
Total	150	99.99… or 100

Table 1 shows the respondents are categorized into three groups: Police Commission Officers (PCOs), Philippine National Police (PNP) personnel assigned to the Diplomat Task Group, and Security Guards (SGs). Each group comprises a sample size of 50 participants, which represents 33.33% of the total respondents. The combined sample size for all groups is 150, which rounds 100% of the total sample. This equal distribution ensures a balanced representation across all categories, allowing for a comprehensive assessment of perspectives and competencies from each respondent group.

2.3. Treatment of the Data

To address the research problem from the study, the researcher employs several statistical tools to analyze the data comprehensively. Percentage is used to determine the proportion of responses relative to the entire dataset, providing a clear view of how each response category contributes to the overall picture. Weighted mean is utilized to highlight the

central tendency of the data, showing where responses cluster and offering insights into the average performance or perception within the dataset.

$$Percentage = \left(\frac{\text{Number of Responses (or Occurrences)}}{\text{Total Number of Responses (or Total Population)}} \right) \times 100$$

Figure 1 Percentage Formula used by the Study

$$F = \frac{\text{Between-Group Variance (MSB)}}{\text{Within-Group Variance (MSW)}}$$

Figure 2 One-way Anova

Figure 1 shows the percentage formula used by the study, wherein the number of responses (or occurrences) is the count of participants or responses that select a particular category or option being measured. For instance, if 30 out of 100 survey respondents chose a specific answer, the number of responses for that option is 30. On the other hand, the Total Number of Responses (or Total Population) is the overall count of all participants or responses in the study. In the same example, if the survey was completed by 100 people, then 100 is the total number of responses. These figures are essential for calculating percentages and understanding the distribution of responses within the dataset.

Additionally, one-way ANOVA is applied to perform statistical analysis and identify significant differences in perceptions among the three respondent groups: PNP personnel, SPD supervising officials, and allied security guards. This parametric test is particularly suitable for this study, as it helps ascertain whether variations in responses across these groups are statistically significant, provided that the data adheres to the assumptions of normal distribution.

Figure 2 shows the one-way ANOVA formula compares the variance between the means of different groups to the variance within each group. The between-group variance (MSB) reflects how much the group means differ from the overall mean, while the within-group Variance (MSW) reflects variability within each group. The F-statistic is calculated by dividing MSB by MSW. A higher F-value indicates a greater likelihood of significant differences between the group means. A higher F-value indicates a greater likelihood of significant differences between the group means. Philippine College of Criminology, 641 Sales St., Sta. Cruz, Manila, MM

A four-point rating scale was used to assess the competency, frequency of the problems encountered, and policy recommendation of the Southern Police District Task Group Diplomatic.

Table 2 Four – Point Rating Scale

Numerical Ranking	Scale Range	Verbal Interpretation
4	3.50 – 4.00	Highly Competent
3	2.50 – 3.49	Competent
2	1.50 – 2.49	Less Competent
1	1.00 – 1.49	Not Competent

3. Results and discussion

This chapter provides a comprehensive presentation of the data collected on the effectiveness of the gamified crime scene simulator for PCCR students. It includes detailed interpretations and analyses of the findings. The chapter addresses the research questions outlined in the study, offering insights and conclusions based on the gathered evidence. 3.1 Competency of Southern Police District Task Group Diplomatic Personnel Knowledge of Work. Table 6 shows the competency levels of Southern Police District Task Group Diplomatic (SPD-TGD) personnel in Knowledge of Work, with an overall mean rating of 3.26. The Philippine National Police (PNP) personnel have the highest mean rating at 3.44, indicating a stronger grasp of the required knowledge compared to security guards (3.25) and police commission officers (PCOs) (3.11). Among the competency indicators, the recognition of VIP personalities, including

ambassadors, workers, and security staff, is rated as highly competent with a mean of 3.50. Other indicators include: "Adequate knowledge and strategies in preventing criminality in the area of responsibilities" (mean = 3.30), "Knowledgeable on duties and responsibilities as a member of diplomatic security" (mean = 3.24), and "Knowledgeable on the current situation of their area of jurisdiction and nearby friendly units" and "Show alertness and awareness for emergencies and ability to perform Basic Life Support (BLS) and first aid," both with a mean of 3.07.

Table 3 Frequency of the Problems Encountered in the operation of Southern Police District Task Group Diplomatic personnel in terms of Work Etiquette

Indicators	PCO		PNP Diplomat		Security Guards		Overall	
	M	VI	M	VI	M	VI	M	VI
Knowledgeable on duties and responsibility as member of diplomatic security.	3.08	C	3.42	C	3.22	C	3.24	C
Adequate knowledge and strategies in preventing criminality in the area of responsibilities.	3.20	C	3.44	C	3.26	C	3.30	C
Knowledgeable on the current situation of their area of jurisdiction as well as the friendly units near on the area of responsibilities	2.98	C	3.44	C	3.22	C	3.21	C
Recognition of VIP personality like Ambassadors as well as workers/staff and security guards in their area of responsibilities.	3.30	C	3.68	HC	3.52	HC	3.50	HC
Show alertness and awareness for emergency situation and know how to perform Basic life support (BLS) and first aid on life to death situation.	3.00	C	3.20	C	3.02	C	3.07	C
Overall	3.11	C	3.44	C	3.25	C	3.26	C

Legend: Verbal Interpretation (V.I.) of the computed weighted mean (M):
3.50 – 4.00 = Highly Competent (HC)   1.50 – 2.49 = Less Competent (LC)
2.50 – 3.49 = Competent (C)   1.00 – 1.49 = Not Competent (NC)

The data indicates that SPD-TGD personnel exhibit a competent level of knowledge regarding their work, particularly in recognizing VIPs. This suggests a solid understanding of their role in diplomatic security, especially in terms of Philippine College of Criminology, 641 Sales St., Sta. Cruz, Manila, MM, Philippines 1003 • (632) 733-1607 • www.pccr.edu.ph 98 of 1 identifying key individuals. However, variations in competency levels among different groups within the task group reveal areas needing improvement. PNP personnel's higher mean score reflects a stronger grasp of the required knowledge compared to security guards and PCOs. Lower scores in emergency response and situational awareness highlight gaps in these areas.

The high competency in recognizing VIPs underscores the Task Group's effectiveness in managing diplomatic personnel and high-profile situations. Nonetheless, the lower scores in emergency response and situational awareness indicate a need for further training and development to enhance these skills. Addressing these areas can significantly improve overall effectiveness and readiness for managing diplomatic security challenges.

The findings align with Longley's (2019) discussion on diplomatic immunity, highlighting the importance of recognizing and understanding the legal protections afforded to foreign officials. While the personnel's ability to identify VIPs demonstrates their awareness of diplomatic protocols, the need for improved emergency response skills emphasizes the necessity of comprehensive training. Enhancing training in all aspects of diplomatic security will ensure that personnel are well-prepared for both routine and crises.

Training/Skills. Table 3 illustrates the competency of the Southern Police District Task Group in handling diplomatic security operations overseas. Diplomatic Security Services (DSS), as a federal law enforcement and security bureau of the U.S. The Department of State is responsible for securing diplomatic missions and protecting U.S. travel documents. DSS operates with the largest global reach of any U.S. federal law enforcement agency, maintaining offices in 29 U.S.

cities and over 270 locations worldwide. They are also tasked with developing and implementing specialized security training programs for State Department personnel and other federal agencies. 7

The data presented in Table 2 reflects the Task Group's ability to perform diplomatic security tasks overseas, drawing a parallel with the extensive global operations of DSS. This comparison provides a benchmark for assessing the task group's competency in similar contexts. The DSS's global presence and its role in safeguarding U.S. diplomatic interests highlight the critical importance of specialized training and extensive operational coverage, which are essential for effective diplomatic security.

Analyzing the data reveals that the Southern Police District Task Group's competencies in diplomatic security are evaluated in terms of their ability to manage and secure diplomatic operations. By comparing these competencies to the high standards set by DSS, the study identifies areas where the task group's performance aligns with or diverges from international best practices.

3.1. Significant Difference in the assessment by the three groups of respondents on the Level of Competency of Southern Police District Task Group Diplomatic in terms of the aforementioned variables

Figure 3 illustrates the significant differences in the assessment of the three respondent groups regarding the level of competency of Southern Police District Task Group diplomatic personnel in terms of knowledge of work training/skills, physical and mental capabilities, and work etiquette. The p-values for Knowledge of Work (0.186), Training/Skills (0.310), and Physical and Mental Capabilities (0.124) exceed the significance level of 0.05, indicating no significant difference in assessments across the three groups. This means that all three respondent groups—PNP, Security Guards, and Police Commission Officers (PCOs)—perceive the task group's competency in these areas similarly.

Variables		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value	Remarks	Interpretation	Analysis
Knowledge of Work	Between Groups	66.173	2	33.087	1.704	.186	Greater than α	Accept Ho	Not Significant
	Within Groups	2854.8	147	19.421					
	Total	2921	149						
Trainings / Skills	Between Groups	30.520	2	15.260	1.180	.310	Greater than α	Accept Ho	Not Significant
	Within Groups	1901.3	147	12.934					
	Total	1931.8	149						
Physical and Mental Capabilities	Between Groups	32.160	2	16.080	2.115	.124	Greater than α	Accept Ho	Not Significant
	Within Groups	1117.8	147	7.604					
	Total	1150.0	149						
Work Etiquettes	Between Groups	119.64	2	59.820	4.073	.019	Less than α	Reject Ho	Significant
	Within Groups	2158.8	147	14.686					
	Total	2278.5	149						

Figure 3 A significant difference in the assessment by the three groups of respondents on the Level of Competency of Southern Police District Task Group Diplomatic in terms of the aforementioned variables (SPSS Table 1 at α = 0.05If p-value is greater than 0.05 (α), accept null hypothesis)

In contrast, the p-value for Work Etiquettes is 0.019, which is below the 0.05 significance level, suggesting a significant difference in how the groups evaluate this aspect. Specifically, the PNP rates the task group as highly competent in work ethics, whereas PCOs and security guards rate them as competent.

The analysis reveals that while the task group is uniformly assessed as competent in knowledge of work, training/skills, and physical and mental capabilities, there are notable differences in the perception of work etiquette. PNP's higher rating indicates a more favorable view of the task group's professional conduct compared to the perceptions of PCOs and security guards. The implications of these findings suggest that while overall competency levels are consistently rated across most variables, differences in Work Etiquettes ratings may point to varying standards or expectations among the groups. Addressing these discrepancies could help in standardizing the perception of work etiquette across all personnel groups.

Relating this to cited literature, variations in perceptions of professional competence and etiquette among different groups align with broader research on organizational behavior and performance evaluations. Differences in expectations and standards among various roles can impact overall assessments and highlight the need for targeted improvements and consistent training across all levels.

3.1.1. Frequency of the Problems Encountered by the Southern Police District Task Group Diplomatic

Knowledge of Work. Table 10 presents the frequency of problems encountered by the Southern Police District Task Group diplomatic personnel concerning knowledge of work. On average, these issues are encountered frequently, with an overall mean of 2.93. All respondent groups—security guards, police commission officers (PCOs), and Philippine national police (PNP)—report frequent occurrences of these problems, with means of 3.26, 2.80, and 2.72, respectively.

Table 4 Frequency of the Problems Encountered by the Southern Police District Task Group Diplomatic in terms of Knowledge of Work

Indicators	PCO		PNP Diplomat		Security Guards		Overall	
	M	VI	M	VI	M	VI	M	VI
1. Lack of knowledge about legal matters concerning treaties and conventions such as the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, which governs diplomatic immunity and privileges.	2.72	F	2.64	F	3.24	F	2.87	F
2. Insufficient knowledge and security measures, in compliance with international human rights standards.	2.92	F	2.86	F	3.34	F	3.04	F
3. None compliant with the Consulate/Embassy protocols to leave personal belongings (cellular phone, other electronic gadgets) in the luggage area.	2.66	F	2.60	F	3.18	F	2.81	F
4. Lack of opportunity to Manage who enters and exits diplomatic premises, including the use of security technologies such as biometric systems.	2.98	F	2.92	F	3.42	F	3.11	F
5. Lack of knowledge of protocols for responding to emergencies such as attacks, natural disasters, and medical crises.	2.70	F	2.60	F	3.12	F	2.81	F
Overall	2.80	F	2.72	F	3.26	F	2.93	F

Legend: Verbal Interpretation (V.I.) of the computed weighted mean (M):
3.50 – 4.00 = Highly Competent (HC)   1.50 – 2.49 = Less Competent (LC)
2.50 – 3.49 = Competent (C)   1.00 – 1.49 = Not Competent (NC)

The specific issues identified include a lack of opportunity to manage access and use of security technologies such as biometric systems (mean of 3.11), insufficient knowledge of security measures in compliance with international human rights standards (mean of 3.04), and a lack of knowledge about legal matters concerning treaties and conventions, such as the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (mean of 2.87). Additionally, problems with non-compliance with Consulate/Embassy protocols regarding personal belongings and inadequate knowledge of emergency response protocols (both with a mean of 2.81) were also noted. These findings highlight that the Task Group encounters several recurrent issues related to knowledge and application of security protocols and legal matters. The consistent frequency of these problems suggests a need for improved training and knowledge management.

Gottschalk (2018) emphasizes that knowledge management is vital in policing, as it involves understanding and applying a range of legal and procedural guidelines essential for effective performance. This study's findings underline the importance of robust knowledge management systems and ongoing training to address identified gaps. Effective knowledge sharing and adherence to established protocols can enhance overall operational efficiency and compliance with international standards.

The implications of these results suggest that addressing these frequent problems through targeted training programs and better knowledge management could significantly improve the competency of the task group. This aligns with Gottschalk's assertion on the necessity of sharing critical knowledge for effective policing and incident management.

3.1.2. Training/Skills

Table 3 illustrates the frequency of problems encountered by Southern Police District Task Group diplomatic personnel in terms of training and skills. The overall mean frequency of these issues is 3.01, indicating that problems are frequently encountered. Security Guards report the highest frequency, with a mean of 3.34, followed by PCOs at 2.88 and PNP personnel at 2.80. The specific problems reported include: a lack of logistical support for armaments and ammunition during pistol and rifle proficiency training, with a mean of 3.30; insufficient formal training in Search and Rescue (SAR) operations to handle natural disasters, mean of 3.26; inadequate skills for setting up perimeter security barriers such as fences and roadblocks, mean of 3.07; a lack of refresher courses in Civil Disturbance Management (CDM) to manage violent assemblies, mean of 2.87; and insufficient standard training in Very Important Person (VIP) protection, mean of 2.55.

The frequent issues related to training and skills underscore the critical need for enhanced logistical and instructional support. According to Kafel (2022), investing in quality training is essential for developing competent officers who can effectively serve and protect their communities. The principle of maintaining and investing in equipment applies equally to training; quality training ensures that officers are well-prepared for their roles.

3.2. Work Etiquette

Table 4 shows the frequency of problems encountered by Southern Police District Task Group diplomatic personnel in terms of work etiquette, with an overall mean of 3.00, indicating the frequent occurrence of issues. The data reveals that security guards report these problems most frequently, with a mean of 3.29, compared to PCOs at 2.89 and PNP personnel at 2.82. The indicators frequently encountered include "improper handling of foreign nationalities who are arrogant during visitation and passport renewals," which has a mean of 3.28; "improper observance of maximum tolerance during unexpected protests with violent and large numbers of militants," with a mean of 3.23; "improper task assignment for Diplomatic Police personnel when local guards are absent," scoring 2.89; "short notice of coordination from security guards to diplomatic police during special events," with a mean of 2.87; and "improper usage of cellular phones during personnel tours of duty," which has a mean of 2.73.

The analysis indicates that all reported issues are frequent, highlighting areas where work etiquette standards are not consistently met. The higher frequency reported by security guards suggests they face more challenges in maintaining proper etiquette compared to PCOs and PNP personnel. This could be due to more direct interactions with the public and additional responsibilities that are not as prevalent among the other groups.

Table 5 Frequency of the Problems Encountered in the operation of Southern Police District Task Group Diplomatic personnel in terms of Work Etiquette

Indicators	PCO		PNP Diplomat		Security Guards		Overall	
	M	VI	M	VI	M	VI	M	VI
1. Improper handling of foreign nationalities who are arrogant during visitation and passport renewals that might threaten the peace and harmonious workplace of the embassy, foreign school, and consulate residence.	3.20	F	3.14	F	3.50	VF	3.28	F
2. Improper observance of maximum tolerance during unexpected protests with violent and huge numbers of militants in the area of responsibilities (AOR)	3.12	F	3.02	F	3.56	VF	3.23	F
3. Improper task for Diplomatic Police personnel to perform duty Security Guards (SG), when there are no local guards in the area of responsibilities (AOR).	2.76	F	2.66	F	3.26	F	2.89	F
4. Improper usage of Cellular Phones during the personnel tour of duty.	2.62	F	2.58	F	2.98	F	2.73	F
5. Short notice of coordination by the security guards to police diplomatic personnel during special events and other issues concerning the safety and security of the AOR.	2.76	F	2.72	F	3.14	F	2.87	F
Overall	2.89	F	2.82	F	3.29	F	3.00	F

Legend: Verbal Interpretation (V.I.) of the computed weighted mean (M):
3.50 – 4.00 = Highly Competent (HC)   1.50 – 2.49 = Less Competent (LC)
2.50 – 3.49 = Competent (C)   1.00 – 1.49 = Not Competent (NC)

The implications of these findings point to the need for improved training and protocols related to work etiquette, especially for security guards who encounter these issues more often. Addressing these issues could enhance overall operational effectiveness and ensure a more harmonious and professional environment at diplomatic posts. This is supported by Pattison (2018), who argues for the importance of addressing diplomatic challenges through appropriate measures and criticism, emphasizing the need for ethical considerations in managing diplomatic relations and work conduct.

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher formulated the following conclusions:

The study assessed the competency levels of the Southern Police District Task Group Diplomatic across embassies, residences, and schools (AOR) in terms of knowledge of work, training, physical and mental capabilities, and work etiquette. Findings indicated variability in competency levels among respondents. While some demonstrated a strong grasp of their roles and responsibilities, others exhibited gaps, particularly in knowledge and training. Physical and mental capabilities varied, affecting overall performance, and although most respondents adhered to work etiquette, a few lapses were observed. This suggests that targeted improvements are needed in these areas to ensure consistent competency across all groups.

The analysis revealed significant differences in the competency assessments of the three respondent groups—embassies, residences, and schools. These differences highlight that each group faces distinct challenges and operates under varying conditions. As a result, a one-size-fits-all approach may not be effective; instead, tailored strategies should be developed to address the specific needs and competency levels of each group.

The frequency of problems encountered by the respondent groups varied across the key areas. Issues related to inadequate knowledge of work and ineffective training were common, pointing to the need for enhanced training programs and orientation. Problems with physical and mental capabilities were also noted, suggesting the need for better support and resources. While issues related to work etiquette were less frequent, they still indicated areas where

improvements can be made. Addressing these frequent problems will be crucial in improving overall operational effectiveness.

Significant differences were observed in the frequency of problems encountered by the three respondent groups, indicating that each group faces unique operational challenges. This variation necessitates a differentiated approach to problem-solving, where interventions are specifically designed to address the distinct issues experienced by each group. By recognizing and addressing these differences, more effective solutions can be implemented.

Based on the study's findings, a set of targeted policy recommendations has been proposed to bolster the competency of the Southern Police District Task Group Diplomatic. Central to these recommendations is the development and implementation of comprehensive training programs designed to address the specific gaps identified in the study. Such programs should cover a wide range of skills and knowledge areas, ensuring that personnel are well-equipped to handle diverse situations and challenges encountered in their roles. By tailoring these training modules to the needs of the task group, the organization can significantly enhance its operational efficiency and effectiveness.

In addition to training, introducing health and wellness initiatives is critical for improving the physical and mental fitness of task group members. The high-stress nature of their work necessitates robust support systems to maintain peak performance. Programs focusing on physical fitness, mental health resources, and stress management can contribute to overall well-being and resilience, thereby reducing burnout and improving job satisfaction. A healthier and more balanced workforce is likely to exhibit better performance and higher morale, which in turn can positively impact the task group's effectiveness.

Standardizing procedures across the task group is another key recommendation to ensure consistency and reliability in operations. Establishing clear, uniform protocols will help reduce discrepancies and enhance coordination among team members. Regular competency evaluations are also essential to keep pace with emerging challenges and evolving best practices. By continually assessing and addressing competency gaps, the task group can adapt to new developments and maintain a high standard of performance. Implementing these recommendations holistically will support the task group in achieving greater operational success and improved overall effectiveness.

Compliance with ethical standards

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in this study. Participants received a clear explanation of the study's objectives, procedures, potential risks, and benefits prior to their participation. They were informed that their involvement was entirely voluntary, with the option to withdraw at any time without any negative consequences.

All necessary measures were taken to ensure participants' confidentiality and data privacy, including secure storage of information. Participants provided written consent, confirming their understanding and willingness to participate.

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