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RESEARCH ARTICLE

AGGRESSION, ORGANIZATIONAL CONTROL AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT OF POLICE OFFICERS IN REGION XII: A STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODEL ON ATTITUDE TOWARD GUNS AND VIOLENCE

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ABSTRACT

The study ascertained the best fit model for the attitude toward guns and violence of police officers in Region XII in relation to aggression, organizational control, and conflict management. This quantitative non-experimental research used the descriptive-causal design. Structural equation model (SEM) was employed in this study with 400 police officers as respondents selected through stratified sampling technique. Data were collected using structured, standardized instruments which were tested for content validity and reliability. The tools used included the mean, standard deviation, Pearson product-moment correlation and structural equation model (SEM). Results disclosed that the level of aggression among police officers was low; the level of organizational control was very high; the level of conflict management was very high; and the level of attitude toward guns and violence of police officers was very low. Moreover, the three exogenous variables posted significant relationship with attitude toward guns and violence. In addition, aggression, organizational control, and conflict management significantly influenced attitude toward guns and violence. Of the five generated models, Model 5 was found to be the most parsimonious model for attitude toward guns and violence.

INTRODUCTION

Casualties of gun violence are twenty times more likely to harm themselves with a firearm, and three times more likely to be apprehended on a charge of violence or possession of a firearm in United States. Those who have survived gun violence express a fear of the police and a gun culture that gives possessing a gun symbolic, social, and tactical importance (O'Neill, Salazar, Vega *et al.*, 2021). In the Philippines, there are 7,126 annual male firearm deaths, compared to 576 for female. Annually, there are 7,702 firearm deaths. Additionally, from 2014 to 2019, there were 45,469 firearm-related deaths in the Philippines, and there was also an additional 576 for the same cause. According to the survey, there were 46,747 incidents of gun violence in the Philippines during the years of 2014 to 2019 (Alpers, Philip & Picard, 2022). In 2018-2022, police officers in SOCCSKSARGEN filed 28 cases which included 12 alleged violations of the right against torture, 11 arbitrary violations of the right to life, and 5 alleged violations of the right against gender-based violence (Commission on Human Rights XII [CHR12], 2023).

If the problem identified on attitude toward guns and violence will not be solved, it will violate human rights and attribute brutality to the offender. Interviews with law enforcement personnel from a local police station—the first comprehensive investigation of how these officers feel about gun regulation in rural America, discovered that officers have complex perspectives on gun control, reflecting their dual identities as police who want to maintain control over the conditions they experience at work and in gun-oriented rural communities. Police officers in rural places embrace a rural recognition, advocating gun rights over control. They distance themselves from firearm-related facets of their rural identities, and learn to include both. To win over rural residents and officers, authorities must better understand the peculiarities and culture of rural areas (Woldoff, Litchfield & Sycapoose Matthews, 2017). Additionally, using guns and other weapons to threaten others is a prevalent kind of recurring violent behavior in both adolescents and adults, with clinically severe repercussions for both the individual and the people around them (Coccaro & Lee, 2020). The analysis indicates that officers embrace two racially distinct forms of police masculinity: the "warrior" and the "guardian," and that they explain their own guns in part by reference to gun violence associated with gangs, drugs, and ongoing shootings. The "guardian" type of police masculinity, in contrast to the "warrior" brand, places an emphasis on assertive protection for (white) victims as opposed to violent

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enforcement against (black and brown) perpetrators (Carlson, 2020). On the other hand, personnel of the Indonesian police force claimed that societal norms and attitudes were equally responsible for internal and external whistleblowing intentions. Promoting a culture of whistleblowing through openness and transparency could encourage law enforcement agencies to be free from corruption and eventually improve the reputation of the country abroad (Zakariaa, Rosnidahb, Saric & Azella, 2020). As a result, the attainment of the organization's goals and objectives will emerge from the ability of the organization to effectively and efficiently manage conflict within its operations. The ability to manage conflict well has a cascading effect that enables managers to establish an environment where personnel may thrive (Omene, 2021). Agropastoral conflicts have been significantly influenced by the use of violence and the presence of armed forces. They also altered the perceived stakes of these disputes, which makes it harder for them to be resolved (Verweijen & Brabant, 2017). Conflict, aggression and bullying in the workplace, as well as for practitioners who support affected employees and policymakers who helped manage and avoid these issues (Notelaers, Van der Heijden, Guenter, Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018) are affected.

Additionally, police interventions frequently deal with aggressive and outrage as well as sensitive emotional states like fear, powerlessness or shame (Deller-Wessels, Bernstein & Lorei, 2022). Additionally, men who feel threatened by acceptance are more prone to have violent thoughts and support the use of guns (Scaptura, 2019). Additionally, the use of additional weapons, such as TASERs, causes police officers to act more aggressively in public (Ariel, Lawes, Weinborn *et al.*, 2019). Surprisingly, gun control is not a major concern in the majority of the countries in the region, but this is quickly changing as violence and proliferation rise dramatically (Sanjurjo, 2020). Additionally, anger has the potential to develop into aggressive assaults and attacks on other people. Male and female are approximately matched in terms of verbal aggression; however, boys are more physically violent, and girls are indirectly more aggressive. Effective conflict resolution through aggression is likely to encourage violent behavior through impulsion and disinhibition (Björkqvist, 2018). Further, police officers routinely encounter hazardous circumstances and traumatic events while on the job, making policing one of the most stressful jobs. The findings showed that negative stress responses and the use of violence by police are influenced by emotional reactions to key circumstances and earlier exposure to abuse and violence during infancy (Kurtz & Hughes, 2021).

Moreover, when police officers are provoked, they would likely engage in aggression. Practically speaking, developing self-control and lessening the consequences of ego depletion appear to be worthwhile research areas to explore further to decrease aggressive conduct in police officers (Staller, Christiansen, Zaiser *et al.*, 2018). Additionally, the secondary group's higher levels of aggression and impulsivity indicate that these officers may be more prone to workplace "problems" that could subject departments to unfavorable public attention (Falkenbach, Glackin & McKinley, 2018). Additionally, police officers' innate aggression has a role in emotional action management. Even though they are chosen for their great emotional control, police officers can occasionally struggle under emotionally trying circumstances (Kaldewaij, Koch, Zhang *et al.*, 2018).

In addition, the levels of anger and aggression among police officers who responded to the attack were noticeably greater at both time points (Wesemann, Bühler, Mahnke *et al.*, 2020). Additionally, police were subjected to high levels of stress from their jobs, including frequent encounters with violence, aggression, environmental stressors, and traumatic incidents, which negatively impacts their physical and mental health (Liakopoulou, Tigani, Varvogliet *et al.*, 2020). Due to behaviors they viewed as unpredictable and unreasonable, including verbal and physical aggressions, interactions with people with mental illness were generally perceived by officers as being conflictual (Wittmann, Jörns- Presentati & Groen, 2021). As a result, Law enforcement officers (LEOs) were more likely to engage in aggressive behavior and the excessive use of force, as well as suffer from mental health issues such post-traumatic stress disorder, burnout, alcoholism, depression, and suicide (Christopher, Bowen & Witkiewitz, 2020).

Further, honor does predict and uniquely explain police violence in contrast to other forms of aggression. Honor endorsers think it is their obligation to uphold these principles, see police violence as a way to control their reputation, and see police violence as reflecting their personal beliefs (Pomerantz, Bell, Green *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, when trying to control or apprehend suspects in underprivileged, minority communities, police use disproportionately large amounts of force (Braga, Sousa, Coldren *et al.*, 2018). Physical aggression can also result in severe physical harm and long-term detrimental consequences (McMahon, Peist, Davis *et al.*, 2020). Freud's aggression theory is related to police because officers cannot legally express anger and aggression outwardly and turn it within (Violanti, 2018). Additionally, it is based on the frustration aggression theory expounded by Yusuf (2016), who argued that conflict was a direct response to the anger and resentment that citizens have built up because they are unable to see their demands due to a lack of resources or obligations that are beyond their capacity. Additionally, the General Aggression Model (GAM) is a meta-theory that takes into account how individual and environmental factors, spanning from biological to cultural, might influence aggressive behavior (Anderson & Bushman, 2018). Also, internal control is also crucial for ensuring that operations are effective and that laws and regulations are followed by both public and private institutions (Lawal, 2019). Internal control is also used to check whether police units are accomplishing the objectives stated at the organizational level in relation to their activities (Lobnikar & Ropoša, 2020). Additionally, control is a fundamental component of the Rule of Law, which is why the police feel that the tools of external and internal control are crucial in determining how they feel about the law and, more broadly, how they feel about ethics (Vuković, 2021).

Also, organizational control is a crucial managerial task that has been extensively researched in the field of management and organizations (Cardinal, Kreutzer, & Miller, 2017). Employee information security aberrant behaviors might be discouraged through organizational management (Choi, 2019). Furthermore, internal control is described as deliberate, law-enforcing activity carried out by authorized officials, control and supervisory units of the National Police, and other parties with authority over the field of internal control (Serhii & Anatolii, 2021). Additionally, organizational conflict management or executive is highly successful on issues of conflict, but does not react to what staff would expect to receive; thus, a result which would affect the conflict

resolution may not be sufficient (Apipalakul & Kummoon, 2017). On the other hand, members of the Indonesian police force claimed that societal norms and attitudes were the driving factors behind both internal and external whistleblowing intentions (Zakariaa *et al.*, 2020). Additionally, internal control assists in imposing and monitoring strategic plans that might relate well both as groups and individuals within the national police service (Bitok, 2021). Internal control is the responsibility of the board and control. Thus, the municipal police chief or the person authorized by the chief implements internal control for the use of coercive measures (Nikolić&Kešetović, 2020). In contrast, Wanchinga (2022) found out that police officers' understanding of attitude management was insufficient while dealing with conflict in the workplace. There is a need for more efficient methods of addressing conflict because police personnel deal with it frequently. The police officers are responsible for the extremely high level of organizational control. The manifestations support the assertion made by a number of authors (Kreutzer, Walter & Cardinal, 2015) that organizational controls work best when used in a complementary manner. In other words, managing employee behavior is best for initiative success when combined with managing its results, and vice versa; possibly because this allows the benefits of one control type to balance the drawbacks of the other. The importance of family conflicts to wellbeing is further demonstrated by the fact that constructive conflict interactions, such as verbal aggression, predict a number of detrimental outcomes, including cognitive impairments, depressive symptoms, anxiety, and early mortality (Curran & Scharp, 2019). In addition, violence and aggression are frequent in other family subsystems, such as hostility between siblings, violence between children and parents, and violence among extended families (Murphy, Farzan-Kashani, LaMotte *et al.*, 2017). Additionally, aggression toward bullying perpetrators and gun violence beliefs in kindergarten (aggressive responses to shame) were linked to hostility toward peer victimization (Nickerson, Shisler, Eiden *et al.*, 2020). Additionally, conflict theorists make a strong case for how conflict is an inherent component of all human relationships, including those within the family (Straus, 2017). Additionally, both adolescents and adults engage in recurring aggressive conduct, which has clinically important repercussions for both the person engaging in it and the people around them (e.g., using firearms and other weapons to threaten others) (Coccaro & Lee, 2020). Additionally, playing violent video games and using a gun controller were positively correlated with behavioral aggression in both real-world situations as well as societal norms relating to violence (Farrar, Lapierre, McGloinet *et al.*, 2017). The sheer presence of weapons is supposed to promote hostility, a phenomenon known as the "weapons effect," by "priming" hostile ideas. A weapons effect may result from frequent exposure to firearms in both the real world and the virtual one. Additionally, using firearms makes one more aggressive because they prime one's memory with violent images (Bushman, 2018). This study was anchored on Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which was elaborated by Siegel (2004, as cited in Panugaling&Caño, 2019). The theory suggests that a person learns to be aggressive because of their experiences in life, instead of being born with the ability of acting violently. Personal observations of others behave aggressively to attain a goal or seeing others credited for violent acts on television and in other media are samples of the experiences.

According to Bandura (1973, as cited in Panugaling & Caño, 2019), people pick up aggressive behavior through imitating the violent behavior of adults while they are young. Violence is something that is learnt through a process known as behavior modeling. Three main sources are typically used to model aggressive behavior: family members, environmental events, and the media (p.68). Robert K. Merton (1910-2003), an American sociologist, used Durkheim's concepts of anomie in criminology. He asserted that crime is a result of the tension that exists between what people want to achieve and the legal ways by which they can do so. As a result, those who were unable to achieve their goals due to insufficient resources would experience strain, which is defined as anger, frustration, and resentment. People who are under strain or pressure may turn to criminal or delinquent means of solving their problems (Siegel *et al.*, 2007, as cited in Panugaling&Caño, 2019, p. 88). General Aggression Model (GAM) is a meta-theory that considers the influence of individual and environmental factors on aggressive behavior, ranging from biological to cultural. Possible mediating factors include the results of evaluation and decision-making procedures (automatic and controlled), as well as internal emotions (including hostile ideas, angry feelings, and high physiological arousal). The exposure to violent media is one situational factor in this article, since it has a significant impact on a variety of cognitive, developmental, emotional, and social processes that can raise the chance of aggression (Anderson & Bushman, 2018).

Internal control is related to the Organizational Theory of Bentley-Goode, Newton and Thompson (2017) and explains that businesses that employ a creative "prospector" strategy are more likely to have lax internal controls than those that employ a successful "defender" strategy. According to theory, proponents find that businesses with qualities higher- like prospects are more probable to give an account to material deficiencies and have less probability to correct them, in addition to recognized factors that contribute to material weaknesses. Using the timely reporting of material flaws as a proxy, they also discover that customers that exhibit more prospector-like traits have lower internal control reporting quality from auditors. The findings imply that report on internal control is a crucial aspect for prospector-like clients to increase audit quality and that strategy in business is a valuable summary indication for assessing organizations' internal control strength. Thus, one of the main goals of this research is to move from the latent variable to the perceived variables. Physical harm given to the person endangers both physical and psychological aspect; hostility refers to the attitude of being unfriendly to others and lastly, anger which displays aggressive behavior towards other having negative thoughts and feeling thus will be isolated from others (Buss & Perry, 1992). The models hypothesized are composed by two kinds of latent constructs which are exogenous and endogenous variables. Aggression, organizational control and conflict management are the exogenous variables of this study. Meanwhile, attitude towards guns and violence is the endogenous variable. Latent variables cannot be directly measured because they were not directly observed. As a result, each latent construct has several measurements or observed variables linked with it. The conceptual framework of the study is presented in Figure 1. The study's main goal is to determine the attitude toward guns and violence of police officers using a structural equation model.

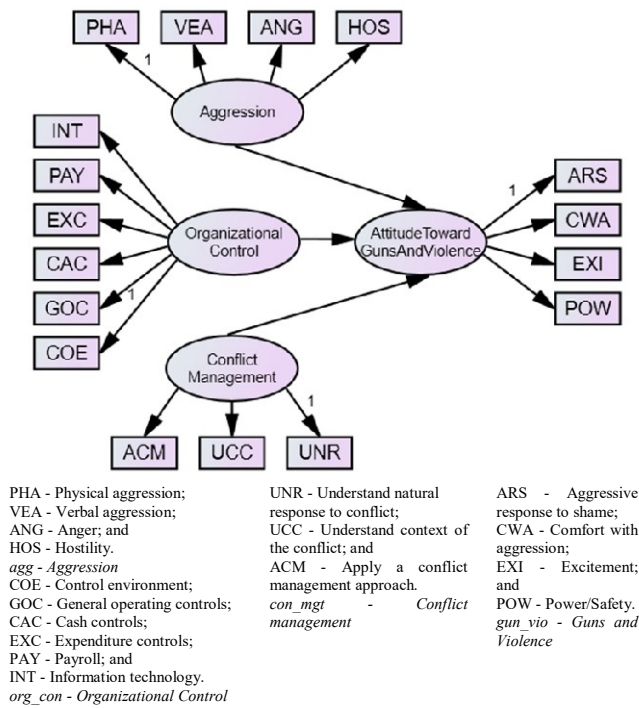


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

Specifically, this study aims to deal with the following objectives: first to determine the level of aggression of police officers in Region XII in terms of *physical aggression; verbal aggression; anger; and hostility*. Second, to know the level of organizational control of police officers in Region XII in terms of *control environment; general operating controls; cash controls; expenditure controls; payroll; and information technology*. Third, to identify the level of conflict management of police officers in Region XII in terms of *understand natural response to conflict; understand context of the conflict; and apply a conflict management approach*. Fourth, to identify the level of attitude toward guns and violence of police officers in Region XII in terms of *aggressive response to shame; comfort with aggression; excitement; and power/safety*. Fifth, to determine the significant relationship between: *aggression and attitude toward guns and violence; organizational control and attitude toward guns and violence; and conflict management and attitude toward guns and violence*. Sixth, to determine the influence of aggression, organizational control and conflict management on attitude toward guns and violence. Lastly, to establish the best fit model for attitude toward guns and violence in the context of police officers in Region XII

Furthermore, the following hypotheses were developed based on the above objectives: First, that there is no significant relationship between aggression and attitude toward guns and violence; organizational control and attitude toward guns and violence; and conflict management and attitude toward guns and violence. Second, aggression, organizational control and conflict management do not significantly influence the attitude toward guns and violence of police officers in Region XII. Lastly, there is no best fit model for attitude toward guns and violence of police officers in Region XII. Each police officer is responsible with serving the public while safeguarding property and life. No police action may be taken in support of or defense of someone engaging in illegal activity, or that of a gang or criminal organization, as per the 2013 PNP Operational Procedures. For the administrators of the

Philippine National Police (PNP) organization, the study will be crucial because it will give them the chance to present relevant seminars to PNP members all over the country with a focus on advancing their professional development and forming their attitude toward guns and violence for their performance as law enforcers. The findings of the study may provide feedback to the Regional Director of Police Regional Office 12 by evaluating the Aggression, Organizational Control, Conflict Management, and Attitudes toward Guns and Violence of Police Officers through good working conditions, harmonious relationships between subordinates and superiors, appreciation and satisfying smart performance, adequate instrumentation and safe workplace, and proper alignment of personnel. To ensure the protection of the Region 12 Police officers, the Regional Director may undertake security survey inspections to determine the complete strength of personnel, capability, instrumentation, and facilities. To advise and develop police officer performance and achieve excellent performance, it is necessary to evaluate workplace records and reports together. The study's results also serve as a foundation for teaching officers how to have a better aggression, organizational control and conflict management, and understand the attitudes of police officers in Region 12. The findings of this study will be used as foundation for the PNP personnel's professional growth, ability to make wise decisions, and improvement in understanding of the field they are in about aggression, organizational control, and conflict management so they can each perform at their highest level as law enforcement officers. Additionally, it might give the police staff some understanding of the value of aggression, organizational control, and conflict management as well as how it might affect their attitude toward guns and violence. It will also change them so that they can comment on how well the police are performing. The study's findings will serve as a helpful guide and point of reference for future researchers, allowing them to explore related research on topics like conflict management, organizational control, and how attitudes toward guns and violence.

METHODS

Presented in this section are the methods used in the conduct of the study such as the research respondents, materials and instrument as well as design and procedure.

Research Respondent: The study utilized 400 police officers of Region XII as respondents. The researcher employed stratified sampling technique in selecting the respondents to collect objective and accurate data. A population group was divided into one or more separate strata based on an inclusion and exclusion criteria. Dash and Paul (2021) claims that to be more viable and decrease estimation mistakes, SEM works with large samples. The ideal sample size for the Structural Equation Model (SEM) is 200 or more (Deng, Yang & Marcoulides 2018). Furthermore, Acharya, Prakash, Saxena, and Nigam (2013) defined stratified sampling that has similar characteristics, such as sex, race, age, education, income, and ethnicity where the data is divided into dissimilar strata (or sub-group). When using stratified sampling as a selection technique the researcher chooses a small sample size that is representative of the population being studied. A population under study in a survey could be too big to assess individually; as a result, groups with the same characteristics are created to save money and time. Inclusion criteria included respondents who were police uniformed personnel, commission and

noncommissioned police officers with a rank of police corporal to police major since they were police officers assigned in the field and handling operational duties, male and female police personnel assigned in four provinces and one charter city in Region XII. They scrutinized and wrote in the consent form and survey instrument, comprehended the instruction and submitted voluntarily to the test. In addition, those who were willing to give consent and those who were willing to take part in the study were included. Meanwhile, the exclusion criteria included those non-uniformed personnel, utility and those uniformed personnel with a rank of patrolman, patrolwomen and police lieutenant colonel to police general and those who were not willing to participate. Lastly, criteria on withdrawal included the researcher's infringement of the respondents' need for privacy and the confidentiality of their identities, that there are no penalties or benefits to which respondents were otherwise committed and that respondents have freedom to decide not to participate, refuse to get involved, or end participation at any time. It must also include how any distress or negative impacts, such as any cognitive risks, are defined or clarified, as well as how likely they are, what has been done to reduce these risks, and any necessary next steps.

Materials and Instrument: This study adapted structured questionnaires on aggression, organizational control, conflict management and attitude toward guns and violence from credible online sources. The questionnaires used in the study were from four credible sources for every variable involved. The first independent variable was aggression adapted and modified from the study of Foster (2008) with 29-item measures for the indicators physical aggression (PHA), verbal aggression (VEA), anger (ANG) and hostility (HOS). The second independent variable is organizational control adapted and modified from the Internal Control and Compliance Questionnaire from the works of Leuty and Pentecost (1981) which consisted of the categories: control environment, general, operating controls, cash controls, and expenditure controls, payroll, and information technology with a total of 56 items as indicators. The third independent variable was conflict management adapted from the works of Gaumer Erickson, Soukup, Noonan *et al.* (2018) with 21-item measures for the three indicators namely: understand natural response to conflict, understand context of the conflict, and apply a conflict management approach. Finally, the survey questionnaire to measure the dependent variable, attitude towards guns and violence was adapted from the work of Shapiro, Dorman, Burkes *et al.* (1997) with 23-item measures for the indicators aggressive response to shame, comfort with aggression, excitement and power/safety. All instruments employed a 5-point Likert-type scaling. Cronbach alpha results for aggression, organizational control, conflict management, and attitude toward guns and violence were .954, .981, .966, and .884, respectively.

Next, the proposed survey instruments were submitted to the researcher's adviser for suggestion and comment and the expert validators were requested for the validation of the said survey questionnaire. The modified survey instruments got the mean score of 4.36 out of 5, categorized as excellent. Once the experts certified the survey, pilot testing with Cronbach Alpha was used to check the survey's reliability. Cronbach's alpha is defined as a measurement to assess a set of scale (or test items) and inward consistency or reliability (Goforth, 2015). George and Mallery (2003) gave the subsequent thumb standards for reliability testing: $> .9$ to Excellent; $> .8$ to Good; $> .7$ to

Acceptable; $> .6$ to Questionable; $> .5$ to Poor; and $< .5$ to Acceptable. The final stage before performing a survey was to run a pilot test with 40 participants. These participants did not participate in the main survey, and the results were computed using the Cronbach Alpha. The range of reliability for both the overall scale score and each subscale was 0.72 to 0.80. The responses of the study participants were interpreted using the scales as follows: A mean score of 4.20 to 5.00 is classified as "Very High," indicating that the item statement is always evident or observed; a mean score between 3.40 to 4.19 falls under the "High" indicating that the item statement is often evident or observed; a mean score of score of 2.60 to 3.39 is classified as "Moderate," indicating that the item is sometimes evident or observed. A mean score of 1.80 to 2.59 is labeled "Low," indicating that item statement is seldom evident or observed. Lastly, a mean score of 1.00 to 1.79 is considered "Very Low," suggesting that the item statement is almost never evident or observed. These descriptive levels give a framework for interpreting the variables measured at various level in the study.

Design and Procedure: This paper used the descriptive-quantitative, non-experimental research design using causal technique. The structural equation model (SEM) was also used in the identification of the best fit model. The research used a descriptive-quantitative, non-experimental design with descriptive causal reasoning. Descriptive quantitative design does not consider potential cause and effect since this does not alter the environment or manipulate any variables when gathering information about variables (Baker, 2017). Non-experimental designs examine existing phenomena without changing the environment to influence subjects' responses, and an independent variable is not changed. Examines present conditions the way things are or were (Radhakrishnan, 2013). Moreover, the goal of the causal technique is to pinpoint the causes and effects of the relationship among two or more groups. The causal study is a study in which the researcher attempts to determine the cause, or reason, for pre-existing differences in groups of individuals (Apuke, 2017).

This study also utilized the structural equation model (SEM). According to Mueller and Hancock (2018), it is a theory-driven data analytical method for evaluating a priori-specified hypotheses about causal relationships between measurable and/or latent variables. For the purpose of analyzing both simpler and more complex models, SEM is seen as a method of analysis involving model development, parameter identification and estimation, data-model fit evaluation and potential model re-specification. The procedure ultimately enables the evaluation of fit between (usually) correlational data from experimental or non-experimental research and one or more competing causal theories stated a priori; the majority of frequent SEM applications are not intended for exploratory purposes. Furthermore, the best model for the study was discovered using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). All indices must adhere to certain guidelines to determine the best fit model. The p-value must be greater than 0.05 and the chi-square value must be lower than 5 divided by the number of degrees of freedom. P-close value must be greater than 0.05 while the root mean square error approximation (RMSEA) value must be lower than 0.05. The model must meet these requirements to be considered adequate: the normed fit index (NFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), comparative fit index (CFI), and goodness of fit index (GFI) must all be larger than 0.95.

Moreover, the researcher followed the following steps in conducting the study. First, the researcher requested permission from the Police Regional Director XII to collect data. Immediately after the approval of the Regional Director, the researcher presented the Regional Director's letter of endorsement to the Provincial Director of Sarangani Police Provincial Office, South Cotabato Police Provincial Office, Sultan Kudarat Police Provincial Office, Cotabato Police Provincial Office and City Director of General Santos City to perform data gathering. At this point, the researcher managed and transmitted the survey to the poll completely. The admin section issued a certificate of appearance for documentation purposes. Therefore, the researcher collected, tallied and organized all the data from the respondents using various scales, broke down and translated the quantifiable outcomes of the information with the help of the statistician, and arrived at conclusions and planned suggestions in light of the study's purpose. Additionally, the researcher gathered, summarized and classified all the data from the respondents using various scales, analyzed and translated the information's visible consequences, and came up with recommendations for decisions and planned in light of the study's goal. The following statistical tools were used for the treatment of the data: Mean was utilized to gauge the level of aggression, PNP's organizational control, conflict management and attitude toward guns and violence of police officers. The Pearson's (r) was used to determine the interrelationship among aggression, organizational control, conflict management and attitude toward guns and violence. Meanwhile, Regression Analysis was used to identify the significant influence of aggression, organizational control and conflict management on attitude toward guns and violence. Lastly, the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to determine the best fit model on attitude toward guns and violence among police officers in Region XII. In the conduct of the study, the researcher adhered to full ethical standards set by the University of Mindanao Professional Schools. The research ethics committee of the University of Mindanao reviewed the following norms of this dissertation: Privacy and Confidentiality, Informed Consent Process, Voluntary Participation, Benefits, Recruitment, Risks, Fabrication, Plagiarism, Falsification, Deceit, Permission from Organization/Location, Conflict of Interest (COI), and Authorship. The researcher obtained the UMERC certificate of approval as proof of the compliance of ethical criteria with UMERC Protocol No. 2023-044.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section are presented the results of the analysis of the data gathered. The presentation of results and discussion follows the order of the study objectives.

Aggression of Police Officers: In Table 1 is show the level of aggression of police officers in Region XII measured by physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger and hostility. It recorded the overall mean rating of 2.06, described as low. This indicates that the level of aggression was among disagree the police officers in Region XII. Individually, verbal aggression registered with the highest mean rating of 2.40; followed by anger with mean rating of 1.97; last was hostility with mean rating of 1.96. Lastly, physical aggression obtained a mean rating of 1.92. The four indicators were labeled as low, or disagree among the police officers in Region XII. The low level of aggression as viewed by the police officers is congruent to the ideas of Choy, Raine and Hamilton (2018)

that prefrontal brain activation can improve judgments of the moral wrongness of aggressive behavior and decrease aggression. Furthermore, at post-training, law enforcement personnel reported bigger increases in psychological flexibility and non-reactivity, as well as greater decreases in salivary cortisol, self-reported aggression, organizational stress, burnout and sleep disturbance (Christopher, Hunsinger, Goerling *et al.*, 2018).

Table 1. Level of Aggression of Police Officers

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Physical Aggression	0.92	1.92	Low
Verbal Aggression	0.98	2.40	Low
Anger	0.96	1.97	Low
Hostility	0.93	1.96	Low
Overall	0.86	2.06	Low

Furthermore, black and Hispanic criminal suspects were more likely than white criminal suspects to be the target of unarmed physical aggression by police officers, and police officers were generally more aggressive than criminal suspects (Oliver, 1994). In addition, people who had contact with the police were more likely to be older, have a history of aggression, reside elsewhere, and have parents who had more financial and caregiving burdens at baseline (Tint, Palucka, Bradley *et al.*, 2017). Additionally, Koepfler, Brewster, Stoloff *et al.* (2012) suggest that employing behavioral control measures during preemployment screening may aid in identifying candidates for police officer positions who may be violent.

Organizational Control in the PNP: In Table 2 is presented the level of organizational control in the PNP in Region XII as perceived by police officers. It indicated an overall mean rating of 4.51 described as very high. This showed that the level of organizational control is strongly agreed on by police officers in Region XII.

Table 2. Level of Organizational Control in the PNP

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Control Environment	0.77	4.51	Very High
General Operating Controls	0.72	4.51	Very High
Cash Controls	0.73	4.51	Very High
Expenditure Controls	0.76	4.49	Very High
Payroll	0.73	4.50	Very High
Information Technology	0.69	4.53	Very High
Overall	0.67	4.51	Very High

Individually, information technology had the highest mean rating of 4.53 followed by control environment, general operating controls and cash controls with mean ratings of 4.51, 4.51 and 4.51, respectively; the payroll obtained a mean rating of 4.50. Lastly, expenditure controls acquired a mean rating of 4.49. The six indicators garnered very high ratings, described as strongly agree by police officers in Region XII. The level of organizational control is attributed to the police officers high level of perception. The manifestations support the assertion made by a number of authors (Kreutzer *et al.*, 2015) that organizational controls work best when used in tandem with one another. In other words, managing employee behavior is best for initiative success when combined with managing its results, and vice versa; possibly because this allows the benefits of one control type to balance the drawbacks of the other. Additionally, organizational control is a crucial managerial task that has been extensively researched in the field of management and organizations (Cardinal *et al.*, 2017). Employee information security deviant behaviors might be

discouraged through organizational control (Choi, 2019). Additionally, organizations struggle to reconcile the loss of control with the innate desire of organizational leaders for more control, which is why the growing tendency toward various forms of employee autonomy provides a contradiction for organizations. They investigated how knowledge work managers and supervisors handled the natural contradiction between employee expectations for autonomy and organizational needs for control, particularly as it related to the handling of complexity and fairness issues (Langfred & Rockman, 2016). Implementing organizational controls is another way to build confidence inside the organization. Controls may improve worker performance both directly and indirectly, by increasing trust. This implied that the relationship between control systems and trust is sensitive and connected to how behavior is controlled (Verburg, Nienaber, Searle *et al.*, 2018). Additionally, the coordinated use of organizational control systems, such as corporate governance and quality assurance, encourages the independent development of four organizational resilience component subsystems in a socio-technical system (Serfontein& Govender, 2021).

Conflict Management of Police Officers: Presented in Table 3 is the level of conflict management in terms of understand natural response to conflict, understand context of the conflict, and apply a conflict management approach. The overall mean rating is 4.25 with a standard deviation of 0.65, described as very high which means that the conflict management is described as strongly agree by the police officers in Region XII. Individually, understand natural response to conflict and understand context of the conflict registered the highest mean of 4.31 and 4.31 individually while apply a conflict management approach got the lowest mean of 4.11. The three indicators garnered very high ratings described as strongly agree by police officers in Region XII. The very high level of conflict management was due to the rating given by police officers.

These manifestations are clear from the assertions made by a number of authors that an organization can effectively and efficiently manage conflict within its operations, leading to high levels of organizational performance and the accomplishment of the goals and objectives of the company. A manager's ability to create an environment where staff members may thrive is influenced by how well they manage conflict (Omene, 2021). Additionally, organizational conflict management methods and executive processes are highly helpful in resolving issues that arise from conflict, but they may not be enough if they don't take into account what employees might anticipate as a result (Apipalukul & Kummoon, 2017). Furthermore, police officers lack knowledge of attitude management when addressing conflict in the work environment. Police officers often work in situations of conflict and hence there was a need for more effective approaches to conflict management (Wanchinga, 2022).

Table 3. Level of Conflict Management of Police Officers

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Understand Natural Response to Conflict	0.67	4.31	Very High
Understand Context of the Conflict	0.73	4.31	Very High
Apply a Conflict Management Approach	0.75	4.11	Very High
Overall	0.65	4.25	Very High

Additionally, different strategies were needed for effective conflict management, and this must be the case with communication when dealing with leadership conflict. Conflicts have always been a problem, particularly when dealing with the powerful since they stem from people's natural desire to pursue their own interests. Because of the different interests and personalities associated with human genders, races, ages, and cultures, leadership conflict consequently became destructive and chaotic inside families, organizations, and relationships. This study's conclusions corroborated those of previous academics in stating that conflict is inevitable and unexpected. Thus, dispute resolution must involve communication. The message must be understood by all parties involved for the communication method to be effective. Additionally, for others to follow, leadership conflict management must begin with the leaders (Gaspard, 2020). As a result, in fighting situations, leaders emphasize adaptability and depersonalization while also identifying a common objective with direct conflict management. The major concept of the Army's dominant culture, where mission accomplishment is of crucial importance, was at the center of this finding. The research's data and analysis revealed the emergence of three subthemes: flexibility-stepping back-removal; concentration-common objective; and perseverance-achievement. These three subthemes play part of the knowledge of interpersonal conflict management in battle. While finally conforming to the cultural setting of the Army's method of conflict management in combat scenarios, the participants displayed similar conflict resolution techniques (Cooke, 2016). In addition, it is believed that peacekeeping was mainly created as a tool for conflict management in reaction to the outbreak of conflict by the international community (Gates, 2018). The comparison of top-level managers with those in the middle and first levels revealed that successful managers exhibited more behaviors related to decision making and planning coordinating, and managers ranked in the top and bottom thirds revealed that successful managers exhibited more behaviors related to conflict management (Luthans, Rosenkrantz & Hennessey, 2019).

Attitude toward Guns and Violence of Police Officers: Presented in Table 4 is the level of attitude toward guns and violence in terms of aggressive response to shame, comfort with aggression, excitement, and power/ safety. It recorded an overall mean rating of 1.69 with a standard deviation of 0.86 described as very low.

Table 4. Level of Attitude toward Guns and Violence of Police Officers

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Aggressive Response to Shame	0.95	1.84	Low
Comfort with Aggression	0.93	1.66	Very Low
Excitement	0.93	1.57	Very Low
Power/Safety	1.00	1.69	Very Low
Overall	0.86	1.69	Very Low

This indicated that the level of attitude toward guns and violence is strongly disagreed by of police officers in Region XII. Individually, aggressive response to shame got the mean rating of 1.84 with a standard deviation of 0.95 described as low, followed by power safety with a mean rating of 1.69 and a standard deviation of 1.00, described as very low while comfort with aggression obtained the mean rating of 1.66 with a standard deviation of 1.66 described as very low.

Table 5.1. Significance of the Relationship between Aggression and Attitude towards Guns and Violence

	Attitude towards Guns and Violence				
	Aggressive Response to Shame	Comfort with Aggression	Excitement	Power/Safety	Overall
Physical Aggression	.540** .000	.506** .000	.474** .000	.469** .000	.548** .000
Verbal Aggression	.488** .000	.451** .000	.476** .000	.420** .000	.505** .000
Anger	.557** .000	.605** .000	.566** .000	.533** .000	.623** .000
Hostility	.564** .000	.566** .000	.519** .000	.502** .000	.593** .000
Overall	.592** .000	.587** .000	.562** .000	.530** .000	.626** .000

Table 5.2. Significance of the Relationship between Organizational Control and Attitude towards Guns and Violence

Organizational Control	Attitude towards Guns and Violence				
	Aggressive Response to Shame	Comfort with Aggression	Excitement	Power/Safety	Overall
Control Environment	-.213** .000	-.186** .000	-.155** .002	-.123* .014	-.186** .000
General Operating Controls	-.205** .000	-.195** .000	-.171** .001	-.140** .005	-.195** .000
Cash Controls	-.209** .000	-.220** .000	-.221** .000	-.179** .000	-.228** .000
Expenditure Controls	-.207** .000	-.212** .000	-.201** .000	-.199** .000	-.225** .000
Payroll	-.216** .000	-.198** .000	-.179** .000	-.135** .007	-.199** .000
Information Technology	-.206** .000	-.170** .001	-.163** .001	-.134** .007	-.185** .000
Overall	-.230** .000	-.217** .000	-.200** .000	-.167** .001	-.223** .000

Table 5.3. Significance of the Relationship between Conflict Management and Attitude towards Guns and Violence

Conflict Management	Attitude towards Guns and Violence				
	Aggressive Response to Shame	Comfort with Aggression	Excitement	Power/Safety	Overall
Understand Natural Response to Conflict	-.156** .002	-.183** .000	-.147** .003	-.117* .019	-.165** .001
Understand Context of the Conflict	-.130** .009	-.117* .019	-.173** .001	-.152** .002	-.158** .002
Apply a Conflict Management Approach	-.092 .066	-.123* .014	-.103* .040	-.043 .391	-.099* .049
Overall	-.137** .006	-.153** .002	-.154** .002	-.113* .024	-.153** .002

Table 6. Significance of the Influence of Aggression, Organizational Control and Conflict Management on Attitude toward Guns and Violence

Attitude toward Guns and Violence					
Exogenous Variables	B	β	t	Sig.	
Constant	.906		3.310	.001	
Aggression	.619	.618	15.662	.000	
Organizational Control	-.276	-.213	-3.836	.000	
Conflict Management	.177	.134	2.393	.017	
R	.643				
R ²	.413				
ΔR	.409				
F	93.035				
p	.000				

Table 7. Summary of Goodness of Fit Measures of the Five Generated Models

Model	P-value (>0.05)	CMIN / DF (0<value<2)	GFI (>0.95)	CFI (>0.95)	NFI (>0.95)	TLI (>0.95)	RMSEA (<0.05)	P-close (>0.05)
1	.000	7.562	.811	.890	.876	.871	.128	.000
2	.000	5.019	.852	.934	.919	.921	.100	.000
3	.000	4.946	.853	.934	.919	.923	.099	.000
4	.000	4.890	.857	.937	.922	.924	.099	.000
5	.080	1.347	.981	.997	.988	.994	.029	.957

Legend: CMIN/DF – Chi Square/Degrees of Freedom NFI –Normed Fit Index
 GFI – Goodness of Fit Index TLI -Tucker-Lewis Index
 RMSEA – Root Mean Square of Error Approximation CFI – Comparative Fit Index

Lastly, excitement obtained a mean rating of 1.57 and a standard deviation of 0.93 described as very low. The very low level of attitude toward guns and violence is due to the rating given by the police officers. These manifestations are evident in the claim of several authors (Wamser-Nanney, Nanney & Constans, 2021), that gun violence is a significant public health issue that is sadly understudied at the moment. Potential risk factors for gun violence include attitudes toward guns. In addition, the attitudes and trust of urban youth regarding the use of gun violence to settle disputes pose a significant obstacle to efforts to lower gun homicides and nonfatal shootings. Overall, the study indicated that the Safe Streets program's adoption resulted in a greater improvement in attitudes about violence in the intervention community (Milam, Buggs, Furr-holden *et al.*, 2016). In addition, proponents of gun rights contend that the widespread possession of firearms lowers the rate of homicide due to deterrent and the fact that they are a reliable form of self-defense. The evidence for gun control policies' efficacy has not been promising, in part because the powerful gun lobby has been successful in blocking the implementation of policies that might be more beneficial (Stroebe, 2016). Additionally, research shows that a large percentage of gun owners utilize their weapons for self-defense. In terms of gun control, study reveals that the general public generally supports regulations requiring mental health examinations, background checks for all gun transactions, and mandated gun education. These laws are meant to keep guns away from dangerous and "at risk" people (Kruis, Wentling, Frye *et al.*, 2023).

In addition, The Safe Streets Program/Cure Violence is a successful community-based initiative for reducing homicide and gunshot rates, according to growing research. It is hypothesized that alterations in attitudes toward violence as well as adjustments in social norms surrounding violence and revenge are the mechanisms behind decreases in communal violence. When employing the SAGAS to measure attitudes toward gun violence, the Safe Streets Program's target communities see a decline in violent crime rates (Milam, Debra, Leaf *et al.*, 2018). As a result of mass shootings, Americans opposed to tougher gun control regulations commonly reframe the issue of gun violence as one of mental health (Sargent & Newman, 2021).

Correlation between Aggression and Attitude towards Guns and Violence of Police Officers: Presented in Table 5.1 is the significance on the relationship between aggression and attitude towards guns and violence of police officers in Region XII. It can be seen in the table that there is a significant relationship between aggression and attitude towards guns and violence with an overall correlation coefficient of .626, which is significant at a 0.05 level of significance. The result shows that there is a significant relationship between aggression and attitude towards guns and violence, thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Specifically, when the indicators of aggression are correlated with attitude towards guns and violence, all the indicators were significant at the 0.05 level of significance, with physical aggression having a correlation coefficient of .548, verbal aggression with .505, anger with .623, and hostility with .593. There is a significant relationship between aggression and attitude towards guns and violence as reflected by the p-value of .000 and a correlation coefficient of .626. The result is consistent with Harris's (2017) findings that a rise in aggressive methods is positively and significantly related to the extent of violent crime, which leads to an increase in gun

purchases made under straw purchases, status, and culturally inherited ideas. Additionally, the weapons effect, which is caused by the sheer presence of weapons, might increase aggression. The idea behind weapons is that they encourage aggression by inciting aggressive thoughts. A weapons effect may result from frequent exposure to firearms in both the real world and the virtual one. Additionally, the memory of aggression is primed by the usage of weapons. This study demonstrates that even when a "good guy" is holding the gun, the sheer presence of a pistol can prime or activate aggressive ideas in memory (Bushman, 2018). Also, men who feel threatened by acceptance are more prone to have aggressive thoughts and support the use of guns and violence. Additionally, men who share intelligence features are more likely to have favorable attitudes toward weapons and violence, and they are also more likely to have frequent aggressive fantasies (Scaptura, 2019). Additionally, aggressive reactions to shame in early adolescence (EA) were linked to higher peer victimization. The findings are explored in the context of the complexity of aggression's underlying causes and the necessity of early detection and intervention (Nickerson *et al.*, 2020). Moreover, having Tasers around increases aggression. Given additional advantages of Tasers for policing found by prior studies, the visual cue of a taser in police interactions with the public causes aggression (Arielet *et al.*, 2019). Additionally, aggression and violence rise as one gets towards the equator, indicating the relationship of climate change. In spite of the strength of this data, there are no hypothetical clarifications for the relationship in aggression and violence worldwide. Individual and social differences in aggression and violence are shaped by societal climate (Van Lange, Rinderu & Bushman, 2017).

Correlation between Organizational Control and Attitude towards Guns and Violence of Police Officers: In Table 5.2 is shown the significance of the relationship between organizational control and attitude towards guns and violence of police officers in Region XII. It can be noticed in the table that the relationship between organizational control and attitude towards guns and violence is significant with an overall correlation coefficient of -.223, which is significant at a 0.05 level of significance. It can be construed that there is a significant relationship between organizational control and attitude towards guns and violence; thus, null hypothesis is rejected. Specifically, when indicators of organizational control are correlated with attitude towards guns and violence, all the indicators were found to be significant at the 0.05 level of significance, with control environment having a correlation coefficient of -.186, general operating controls with -.195, cash controls with -.228, expenditure controls with -.225, payroll with -.199, and information technology with -.185. There is a significant relationship between organizational control and attitude towards guns and violence as found with a p-value of .000 and a correlation coefficient of -.223. The finding is consistent with the research of Wild (2022), which found that prominent police groups and leaders are increasingly calling for action on gun policy in the wake of multiple recent mass shootings. This advocacy from a larger community is noteworthy because there has frequently been disagreement over how to address gun violence. In addition, given that the offender poses an immediate danger to the police officer or to others, it can justify the usage of force by the police organization. The theories of self-defense, defense of a relative, and defense of a stranger all permit the use of firearms. However, one who utilizes self defense should really

be at risk for losing his life, and the danger being avoided must be true, present, and immediate. Self defense needs to occur in response to unlawful aggression in order to qualify as a defense (Philippine National Police [PNP], 2013). Furthermore, arming people would not be a better option to reducing crime than measures on stronger gun control implemented by the PNP, such as being stricter on the issuance or even suspension of Permits to Carry Firearms Outside Residences (PTCFORs). The idea of issuance of firearms to anti-crime "volunteers" with firearms to aid in enforcing the law could result to an increase in crime, especially if not used properly. The community should learn a vital lesson from the shooting incidents last 2020 involving police officers who were not on duty. Only uniformed police and military personnel on official duty are permitted to carry guns outside of their residences for the purposes of maintaining law and order (Lacson, 2021).

Correlation between Conflict Management and Attitude towards Guns and Violence of Police Officers: Presented in Table 5.3 is the significance of the relationship between conflict management and attitude towards guns and violence of police officers in Region XII. It can be shown on the table that there is a significant relationship between conflict management and attitude towards guns and violence with an overall correlation coefficient of $-.153$; on significant at a 0.05 level of significance. It could be stated that there is a significant relationship between conflict management and attitude toward guns and violence of police officers; thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Specifically, the two indicators of conflict management are correlated with attitude towards guns and violence. The two indicators were found to be significant at 0.05 level of significance, with understand natural response to conflict having a correlation coefficient of $-.165$, understand context of the conflict with $-.158$ while the last indicator which is apply a conflict management approach is not significant since the significant level of $.049$ is above the 0.05 level of significance. There is a significant relationship between conflict management and attitude toward guns and violence as shown with a p-value of $.002$ and a correlation coefficient of $-.153$. The results are consistent with the Asia Foundation (2017) survey, that conflict in central and western Mindanao on gun ownership is high in the Philippines; civilian firearm possession both legal and illegal has a rating of 4.7 per 100 people. In the Philippines, between two-thirds and three-quarters of all weapons in circulation are owned by citizens rather than the government, making it the country with the second-highest proportion of civilian ownership in Southeast Asia.

In addition, less knowledgeable police are accountable for a significant amount of the violence in civil conflicts. The main finding is that militarization and differing levels of accountability interact to have a significant impact on police violence propensity. High degrees of militarization do not result in low levels of police violence when there is high accountability. Higher costs of violence do not outweigh deeply rooted convictions that justify using force. The study of conflict transitions, state repression and violence can all be affected by these findings (Toscornia, 2023). Furthermore, couples who use violence are different from nonviolent couples in that they are more likely to have arguments and use negative consequences as a coping mechanism (Fernet, Hébert & Paradis, 2016). Adolescents' experiences with dating violence also hint to gender-specific pathways and indirect relationships between insecure attachment and teen dating

violence victimization. Anxious attachment was specifically linked to self-reported and perceived conflict engagement techniques victimization among boys, girls, and their relationships (Bonache, Gonzalez-mendez & Krahé, 2017).

Influence of Aggression, Organizational Control and Conflict Management on Attitude toward Guns and Violence of Police Officers: Presented in Table 6 is the significance on the influence of aggression, organizational control and conflict management on the attitude toward guns and violence of police officers in Region XII. The result revealed that the standard coefficient of aggression obtained the highest beta of $.618$. It indicated that aggression has the greatest influence on attitude toward guns and violence of police officers compared to organizational control with -0.213 , correspondingly. In addition, the regression model is significant since the F-value is 93.035 and a corresponding p-value of 0.000. Thus leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Hence, it could be concluded that the attitude toward guns and violence of police officers can be predicted by a variable. Furthermore, the R² value of $.413$ signifies that predictor variables, aggression, organizational control, and conflict management attribute to 41.3 percent of the variation in attitude toward guns and violence. This means that 58.7 percent of the variation could be explicated by other factors aside from these three variables. In the individual capacities, the data shows that the three exogenous variables namely; aggression, organizational control and conflict management significantly influence the endogenous variable which is the attitude toward guns and violence. However, aggression and organizational control was noticed the best domain that significantly influence attitude toward guns and violence with p-value of 0.000, 0.000 respectively, which is lesser than 0.05 significance level.

The result supports the work of Shulman, Beardslee, Fine at al. (2021), that even after taking into account a number of potential confounding variables, males showed statistically significant increases in anxiety and aggression (especially reactive aggression) during the years they were exposed to gun violence. The higher effect on reactive aggressiveness shows that exposure to gun violence may have an influence on one's ability to regulate one's behavior or process social information. Also, hypermasculinity sibling aggression, and peer aggression predict a history of aggressive acts in adulthood, whereas aggressive ideation and tendencies were predicted by antagonism, negative affect, hypermasculinity, sibling aggression, domestic aggression and gun excitement. Hypermasculinity predicted high interest in gun use and ownership, and those who did reported acting more aggressively in the past than those who did not. Hypermasculinity, hostile intent bias, and gun excitement all had stronger relationships with violence when there was aggression (Matson, 2016). In addition, having friends in gangs, having limited social self-control, and being directly exposed to gun violence were all positively correlated with past week aggression (Forster, Grigsby, Unger *et al.*, 2015). Additionally, playing violent video games and using a gun in real life violence as well as societal aggression norms were connected with each other. According to expectations, playing violent video games and using a gun controller were both positively correlated with aggressive conduct (Farrar *et al.*, 2017). Moreover, under the terms of the LOI Kontra Boga, the Philippine National Police (PNP) is in charge of gun control. The PNP conducts aggressive police operations against threat

groups, criminal elements, and civilians who possess unregistered and unlicensed firearms as well as those with expired or un-renewable licenses (PNP, 2009). Further, law enforcement organizations' efforts to further reduce gun violence focus on either strengthening already-existing laws or enacting new ones that could stop crimes involving guns such as homicides, assaults, and robberies as well as other types of gun violence such as fatal and nonfatal firearm suicides, gun accidents (Peterson & Bushway, 2020). Also, the fact that American police are generally opposed to gun restrictions and continue to be one of the only institutions in American society with a significant enough influence on conservative voters to make any federal gun regulations feasible is another important barrier to federal gun control, according to the Los Angeles Police Organization. The group intensified its "tough on crime" rhetoric while quietly reminding police that liberals favored gun restriction (Serwer, 2022).

Best Fit Model for Attitude toward Guns and Violence: An analysis of the generated structural model of the study is indicated in this part. The general objective of the study is to determine the best fit model of attitude toward guns and violence with indicators of aggression, organizational control and conflict management of police officers in Region XII. Presented in Table 7 is the summary of goodness of fit measures of the five generated models. Of the five generated models, Model 5 passed the criteria in assessing the best fit model, showing a p-value of 0.957, with CMIN/DF = 1.347, RMSEA = 0.029, TLI = 0.994, NFI = 0.988, CFI = 0.997, and GFI = 0.981. Hence, Model 5 is the best model that explains the attitude toward guns and violence of police officers in Region XII. Based on the measurement model of the best fit for the five generated models, Models 1-4 did not meet and pass the criteria for the Normed Fit Index, Tucker-Lewis Index, Comparative Fit Index, or Goodness of Fit Index. Models 1 to 4 probably have not accurately represented the study's underlying theoretical framework or relationship among variables. The models may have lacked significance in its predictors, included irrelevant variables, or failed to capture complex interactions. As a result, the models did not adequately explain the observed data patterns, leading to a poor fit. The latent endogenous variable is attitude toward guns and violence. Meanwhile, the latent exogenous variables: aggression, organizational control, and conflict management are the other three variables in the oval. Also, the fit indices for a single path coefficient (p-value and standard error) and the overall model fit (χ^2 , RMSEA) is where the SEM evaluation based. The usability of model fit indices appears flexible. In general sense, it suggests an increase in the probability of rejected good models in which the more fit indices applied to an SEM, the more likely it is that a misspecified model will be rejected.

Shown on Figure 2 is the Measurement Model of the Best Fit, which shows that the direct causal relationship of the latent exogenous variables: aggression, organizational control, and conflict management towards the latent endogenous variable, attitude towards guns and violence of police officers in Region XII, satisfied the criteria for the best fit model. There is interconnectedness among aggression, organizational control and conflict management on attitude toward guns and violence which the model apparently showed. There is a direct relationship between aggression and attitude toward guns and violence. Also, organizational control has a direct relationship

with attitude toward guns and violence. On the other hand, conflict management also has direct relationship with attitude toward guns and violence. The best fit model showed that the three variables included other indicators which were missing because they were not passed the criteria of best fit model. As a result, the best fit model was discovered. The null hypothesis that there was no best fit model was rejected. It could be stated that there is indeed a best fit model which predicts the attitude toward guns and violence of police officers in Region XII. These results can be further explained by the idea on frustration aggression theory as expounded by Yusuf (2016) which claimed that conflict arose as a direct result of the growing dissatisfaction and anger among citizens who felt powerless to address their demands due to a lack of resources or other impediments. According to Soloviev, Zhernov and Ichitovkina (2020), female police officers were considerably less likely to exhibit maladaptive behaviors such as physical aggression, irritability, suspicion, verbal aggression, hostility, and overall aggressive conduct.

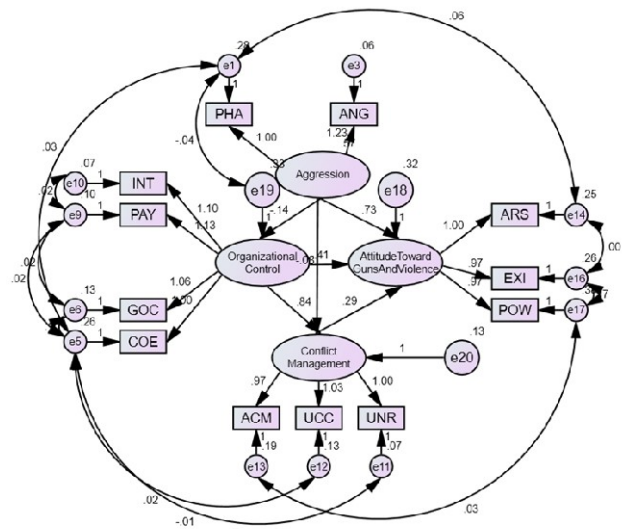


Figure 2. Best Fit Model in Standard Solution for Attitude toward Guns and Violence

Additionally, police officers face high levels of stress while performing their duties. They frequently deal with violence, aggression, environmental stressors, traumatic events, and other stressors, which negatively impacts their physical and mental health (Liakopoulou *et al.*, 2020). Also, police officers are subjected to a number of stressful situations, which increases their risk for aggression, the excessive use of force, and mental health problems like post-traumatic stress disorder, burnout, alcoholism, depression, and suicide (Christopher *et al.*, 2020). Additionally, organizational control is a crucial administrative task that has been the subject of extensive research in the management and organizations fields. Existing empirical research on organizational control with a focus on its effects (i.e., the link between control and outcomes) (Cardinal *et al.*, 2017).

Moreover, by presenting a modern idea of control depending on self (i.e., discretion), the primary exact proof of values being shared as a significant precursor, and by underlining authoritative controls as frameworks, subsequently considering their intelligent inspirational impacts, this study adds to our understanding of organizational controls. Accordingly, the findings show that using output and behavior control mechanisms simultaneously can lessen each one's specific

drawbacks, but just relying on output controls increases extrinsic incentive and decreases intrinsic drive (Jung-Gehling & Strauss, 2018). In addition, in creating institutional frameworks for effective social problem solving, and developing the proper character for those who carry out the institutional responsibilities, police organizations have the ability to transform themselves into institutions recognized as legitimate legal authorities offering effective service to their recipients by limiting the arbitrary use of power. The police organization can achieve the ideal balance between a theory of governance and contemporary policing through this procedure (Jones, 2009). Furthermore, the National Police Commission, an agency mandated by the 1987 Constitution of the Philippines as to Major Police Reform Laws, the Republic Act No. 6975 as amended by Republic Act No 8551, where as to administration and control of the Philippine National Police. It likewise practices managerial control and functional and operational supervision over the Philippine National Police (PNP). Prescribing rules and regulations for efficient organization, administration, and operation are included on the police manual which the organization develops. This includes criteria for manpower allocation distribution and deployment, recruitment, selection, promotion, and retirement of personnel and the conduct of qualifying entrance and promotional examinations for uniformed members (National Police Commission[NAPOLCOM], 2023). In addition, the state's policy is to uphold peace and order, guarantee safety for everyone, as well as strengthen local government capacity with the aim of effectively delivering fundamental services to the populace. This is accomplished by creating a highly efficient and proficient police force that is both national in scope as well as civilian in nature. To accomplish this, the State shall enhance the system of cooperation and coordination among the general public, local government units, and the unified enforcement and security organizations established according to this Act. The organization, training, and equipment of the police force must be geared primarily toward carrying out police duties. Priority must be given to its civil nature and national extent. No part of the police force may be military, and no job within it may be filled by active personnel of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Republic Act No. 6975, 1990). Moreover, five levels of analysis are used to identify potential conflicts between cooperating organizations: interorganizational; intraorganizational; interprofessional; interpersonal; and intrapersonal. Interorganizational and interpersonal barriers to international police collaboration are the key ones. In particular, the case management systems used by Euroregional police groups are out of sync, which hinders cooperation. The analyses' potential benefits for increased police collaboration in the Meuse-Rhine Euroregion are discussed in the article's conclusion and provide input on the conceptual framework (Peters, Vanderhallen & Nelen, 2016).

Furthermore, in particular in departments that are more reflective of the populations they serve, it was proposed that screening candidates for conflict management skills reduces racial disparity in discretionary arrests (Nicholson-Crotty, Nicholson-Crotty & Li, 2019). Additionally, the preliminary research reveals that the mode idea is applicable to police work and needs further investigation because of its potential to de-escalate situations and manage conflicts in police contexts (Deller-Wessels, Bernstein & Clemens, 2022).

Human life involves conflict, which must be handled wisely by creating a culture of peace as a means of conflict resolution. From a security-focused perspective that the application of

leadership styles serving the Indonesian Military Ordinate has undergone a change in viewpoint on conflict management, moving from a humanistic and humanitarian perspective that values conversation and negotiation based on love and mutual respect. Additionally, it was discovered that the Indonesian Military Ordinate has consistently provided services based on compassion and humane principles, which will help the army manage conflicts in a way that promotes peace (Wuli, Luddin & Suyatno, 2020). The study revealed that information-sharing behaviors are associated with a person's conflict-handling style, which can be competitive, accommodating, avoiding, compromising, or collaborating (Kulikowski, 2018).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study focused on aggression, organizational control, conflict management and attitude toward guns and violence in Region XII. Results showed that the level of police officers aggression was low. This finding implies that the variable aggression is seldom evidently observed by police officers. It observed that police officers are not aggressive in any forms of violence and they serve the community by ensuring the rights of every Filipino are protected. A low level of aggression among the police officers can foster positive relationships with the community they serve. It can help build trust, as people may feel more comfortable approaching and cooperating with the police in non-threatening situations. Based on the result on the low level of aggression, to maintain and enhance this aspect, the specific recommendation is to intensify the trainings on "7-Day Focus Reformation/Reorientation and Moral Enhancement for Police Officers in Line with Internal Cleansing Effort", and "Integrated Training Program on Moral Recovery Program, Gender and Development, and Human Resource" of police officers to reach the very low level of aggression. Further, the level of organizational control was very high, which indicates that for the police officers in Region XII, this is always evident or observed. This implies that PNP organization is a symbol of unwavering commitment for having a positive influence on the communities they serve by restructuring and strengthening the PNP organization. PNP organization is one of the unique agencies in the government that maintain the secrecy, strictly follows the chain of command, strong discipline, loyalty, obedience to superiors, command responsibility, integrity, orderliness to their organization. Further, the following specific recommendation is made: restructuring and establishing more police offices by allowing the PNP to respond to the shifting environment of policing: Advancement Technology of PNP to improve the quality of operations and Digital Evidence System by improving evidence collection and data storage. This will reorganize the process of handling and organizing evidences by ensuring the integrity and accessibility.

Moreover, the level of conflict management obtained a very high level which indicates that for the police officers in Region XII, this is always evident or observed. This implies that using conflict resolution techniques inside the PNP can result in successful dispute resolution. The PNP can stop problems from getting worse and find amicable solutions by using suitable conflict resolution strategies, such as negotiation, mediation or arbitration. Effective dispute resolution can raise public confidence in the PNP; people have a favorable opinion of the police when they perceive that they can resolve disputes fairly and effectively, which creates trust between the police and the community.

Further, the proceeding specific recommendations are suggested: Comprehensive Training Programs- develop comprehensive training programs that involve conflict resolution, negotiation techniques, arm conflict tactics, and cultural sensitivity training: Conflict Management Units- establish specialized units within the Philippine National Police that solely focus on conflict management. These units may consist of highly skilled officers who have undergone advance training in conflict management and can be deployed to handle intense and sensitive situations: Collaborative Partnerships- create a strong partnerships and collaborations with tribal chieftain, barangay captains, organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Based on the findings, the level of attitude toward guns and violence was very low which indicates that for the police officers in Region XII, these are almost never evident or observed. This implies that public safety is a top priority of police officers, and they work to prevent and reduce gun violence. They might use community policing to build relationships and trust with communities, enforce gun control laws, and work with various stakeholders to stop violence in their areas. Further, attitudes towards guns and violence can vary depending on the police officers' attitude. While some police officers advocate for stricter gun control measures, others may have more lenient views or prioritize self defense safety. Police attitudes toward guns and violence can differ depending on the laws and regulations in a particular area, societal norms, and individual attitudes within the police force. It's important to note that police attitudes are influenced by a range of factors, including training, organizational policies, and community expectation. Further, the following specific recommendations are made: continue strengthening the low level of attitude toward guns and violence by revisiting the policies of their organization; establish clear guidelines and procedures for the use of firearms, place a strong emphasis on accountability, and make sure officers understand the legal and ethical standards that govern their use. Officers must be held accountable for any misuse or excessive force, fostering a culture of transparency and integrity; provide extensive training on firearms and the use of force; ensure that officers receive on-going and comprehensive training in firearms handling, marksmanship, and the use of force; emphasize non-violent approaches, encourage officers to prioritize non-violent methods when dealing with violence. This includes using appropriate tools and resources to resolve situations without using firearms, active listening, and effective communication. Further, intensify community engagement and public trust, encourage officers to passively engage with the communities with in the localities they serve and strengthen community outreach programs, participate in community activities, and build strong relationships with society. This can help promote public trust, reduce pressure, and decrease the use on force.

Based on the research, aggression, organizational control and conflict management have the most significant influence on the attitude toward guns and violence of police officers in Region XII. The study revealed that aggression and organizational control are the best domains that significantly influenced attitude toward guns and violence. This study was anchored on the Social learning theory created by Albert Bandura as expounded by Siegel (2004, as cited in Panugaling & Caño, 2019) who argued that people learn to be aggressive through their life experiences rather than being born with the capacity to act aggressively (p. 68). Violence is something that is learned through a process known as behavior modeling

(Bandura, 1973, as cited in Panugaling & Caño, 2019, p. 68). According to notions of anomie from Merton (1910–2003) in criminology, crime is a result of the tension that exists between what people want to achieve and the legal ways by which they can do so. As a result, these beliefs were confirmed by the results of this study on attitudes about guns and violence (Siegel *et al.*, 2007, as cited in Panugaling & Caño, 2019, p. 88). It is recommended that the relationship between aggression, organizational control, conflict management and attitude toward guns and violence must be sustained by the police officers in Region XII to better restrain aggression, which can affect their daily work and continue to retain the organizational control and conflict management for the better success of the police officers in implementing the rules, policies, procedures and regulations of their organization. The result may bring about a better relationship among police commission officers, police non-commission officers and the community. Further, to create an innovative mechanism like counseling, awareness on aggression seminar, and stress and emotional training to enhance their skills for restraint in aggression and the efficient response on attitude toward guns and violence may be implemented. Additionally, the key officials or administrators may also look into programs on seminars and training for the improvement of their aggression management to strengthen and develop police commitment to their organization.

Further, extreme evaluation and monitoring may be conducted regularly on police offices (police stations, police provincial offices, police battalions and police companies) on aggression, organizational control, conflict management and attitude towards guns and violence particularly on their weakness to improve their resistance in their field of duties so that they can perform according to their organization's goals and objectives. Among the five generated models, Model 5 best fits attitude toward guns and violence of police officers in Region XII. As strong predictors of attitude toward guns and violence such as aggressive response to shame, excitement, and power/safety, the best fit model includes indicators of aggression, physical aggression and anger; organizational control such as control environment, general operating control, payroll and information technology; and conflict management such as understand natural response to conflict, understand context of the conflict and apply a conflict management approach. Finally, it is recommended based on the structural model, that other variables or factors apart from the variables being used in this study be investigated. Future researchers should conduct more research about police, specifically attitude toward guns and violence.

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