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FINANCIAL LITERACY PROGRAMS AMONG THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE (PNP) PERSONNEL IN THE PROVINCE OF BENGUET

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Despite the widely recognized role of financial literacy in ensuring financial stability and informed decision-making, substantial evidence shows that many individuals—particularly those in high-responsibility and high-stress occupations—continue to lack adequate financial knowledge and applied money management skills. Globally, only about 33% of adults are considered financially literate, with even lower rates observed among workers facing irregular income, high stress, and complex financial demands (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014; World Bank, 2019). In contrast, countries with institutionalized financial education demonstrate significantly better outcomes; for example, Denmark reports a 71% financial literacy rate, supported by mandatory financial education in secondary schools (World Economic Forum, 2024), while OECD countries with national financial literacy strategies show higher household saving and retirement preparedness (OECD, 2023). However, the uneven availability of structured and accessible financial education across professions and regions leaves many individuals unable to budget consistently, manage debt effectively, or plan for retirement, contributing to persistent financial vulnerability. Empirical studies further link low financial literacy to higher debt levels, inadequate emergency savings, and elevated financial stress, which negatively affect both personal well-being and work performance (Atkinson & Messy, 2012; Garman & Forgue, 2019). This persistent gap between the acknowledged value of financial literacy and its limited implementation underscores a systemic problem that perpetuates poor financial outcomes and long-term economic insecurity among vulnerable populations.

Financial literacy is a fundamental life skill that enables individuals to achieve sustainable financial stability by effectively managing income, paying obligations, and building savings, and its importance is heightened among workers in high-stress professions such as law enforcement. Research by Lusardi and Mitchell (2014) demonstrates that individuals with stronger financial education are more capable of saving, investing, and making informed financial decisions, whereas limited financial knowledge often leads to poor planning, excessive debt, and long-term financial vulnerability, including inadequate retirement preparation. This issue is particularly pronounced among police officers, military personnel, and first responders, whose irregular work schedules, high stress levels, and occupational risks complicate personal financial management (Duxbury & Higgins, 2013). Financial strain among these groups has been linked to burnout, reduced job performance, and increased susceptibility to workplace accidents, as financial stress compounds existing occupational pressures. While financial literacy is essential across all professions, its role is especially critical for individuals in demanding and unpredictable work environments, as stable income alone does not guarantee financial well-being without the knowledge and discipline required for budgeting, investment, and long-term financial planning.

In the end, no matter what you do for a living, having enough knowledge on handling your finances is the most important thing. Some jobs may have easy access to financial resources and support, but others may not. Anyone who wants to be stable and successful needs to know how to manage their finances well. Financial education programs that address the needs of police officers and other high-stress workers should be available. Research by Duxbury and Higgins (2013) demonstrates that financial wellness programs create positive effects on employee mental health, job satisfaction, and work performance. Police personnel would benefit from financial literacy education that teaches them to manage their specific work-related financial challenges, including injury compensation and retirement planning, and will eventually manage their money effectively. This could lead to better financial stability, reduced stress, and improved work performance. Additionally, they face various challenges resulting in extreme stress that interferes with their work activities and leads to detrimental impacts on their individual lives. The physical nature of their work, along with their extended and unpredictable work hours, dangerous conditions, and traumatic exposure, leads to elevated

stress levels, anxiety, and exhaustion, which negatively impact their work performance and their health status. The issue of financial stress will add to their daily burden. When they experience financial problems, their higher mental and emotional distress weakens their ability to focus and make proper decisions.

The combination of intense physical demands, occupational risk, and financial strain places police officers at heightened risk of financial anxiety, which has been empirically linked to deteriorating mental health, burnout, impaired decision-making, and reduced job performance (Burton & Barling, 2015). Financial stress can undermine officers' focus and physical readiness, increasing the likelihood of errors during critical operations, while prolonged anxiety negatively affects both professional effectiveness and personal relationships. Research consistently demonstrates that strong financial management skills are associated with better work outcomes, as financially literate individuals are more likely to save regularly, manage debt responsibly, and plan for future needs, thereby reducing stress and improving overall functioning (Joo & Grable, 2004). Conversely, limited financial knowledge increases vulnerability to excessive debt, poor financial choices, and inadequate retirement preparation—an especially critical issue for police officers who often retire earlier than other public-sector employees due to the physical nature of their work. Financial literacy equips officers to prioritize high-interest debt repayment, plan for retirement through savings and investment instruments that benefit from compound interest, and establish emergency funds to manage unexpected expenses without resorting to high-cost borrowing, ultimately supporting financial security, psychological well-being, and sustained professional performance.

However, given the importance of financial literacy, many PNP personnel, not only in Benguet but throughout the entire Philippines, have trouble managing their money, even though they have knowledge of financial education. The lack of financial knowledge and skills prevents them from choosing suitable financial solutions. The financial education gap becomes most apparent in rural Benguet province because police officers there lack regular access to official financial education programs (PNP Finance Service, 2021). This gap prompted the conduct of the study to investigate the financial literacy education programs implemented in the Province of Benguet for PNP personnel. The 2019 Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Financial Literacy Survey revealed that numerous Filipinos, including public sector employees, lack sufficient understanding of money management, which includes saving and investing, insurance purchase, budget creation, and debt repayment. Standard workplace staff members do not face the same financial challenges that police officers must handle because their budget requirements differ significantly. They often live paycheck to paycheck because their work hours are so unpredictable due to the 24/7 work scheme. The situation becomes more severe because police officers lack financial management skills, which prevents them from building retirement savings and emergency funds and supporting their family members (PNPFS, 2020). If they do not have knowledge on how to handle their money well, they might fall into a debt trap, spend too much on unnecessary things, and not be able to make their payments on time (Joo & Grable, 2004).

Through Executive Order No. 201 (2019), the Philippine government raised the pay of police officers in the Philippines. This order doubled the base pay for military and uniformed personnel. But police officers still have a lot of money problems (Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines, 2019). However, many police officers still have trouble making ends meet even though their salary increased. The combination of expensive living costs, shifting work schedules, and family duties leads to this situation, according to Macalalag (2021), so they turn to unauthorized budgeting methods because they want to save money through *paluwagan* and *bayanihan* practices. These emergency systems offer helpful support during emergencies, yet they do not create sustainable financial stability, which allows people to create savings and retirement accounts (Tanchanco, 2021).

The Philippine National Police, together with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the BDO Foundation, joined forces with one purpose: to help every member of the police community build a more secure financial future. The two organizations created their partnership through a Memorandum of Agreement, which they established in 2001 to show their commitment toward improving the health and welfare of military personnel and civilian staff members. To bring this vision to life, the PNP Finance Service designed a financial literacy program and took the lead in guiding and training participants, as outlined in PNP Memorandum Circular No. 2022-121. The circular functions as the program's direction, which guides the delivery of lessons to the target audience. The program exists to provide PNP members with the ability to save money and create budgets, invest for their future, and develop retirement planning skills, which will help them manage their daily life better and achieve their future objectives (PNPFS, 2020).

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The Financial Literacy Program was created with the intention of helping PNP personnel to build their financial skills and capabilities, which they will need in order for them to manage their money more wisely and feel more secure in the long run. The program provided financial stability education to police officers who had shown their need for financial security through their money management concerns. However, despite these good intentions of the management, the program has faced real challenges, and the biggest issue is to encourage police officers to participate fully and stay engaged throughout the sessions, especially in rural areas like Benguet,where the program does not reach everyone, and many officers appear disconnected from its purpose. Fitzpatrick (2019) explains that police officers participate in financial education workshops because they need to attend them, but they do not expect to learn anything substantial. These workshops have become less effective because participants fail to engage with their available activities. The program faces obstacles because police officers stationed in distant locations need financial education, which must be both interesting and relevant to their work as law enforcement officers.

The Financial Literacy Program of the PNP Finance Service is one of the few formal efforts to address the growing gap in financial knowledge among police officers, even if putting it into practice has not been easy. The program teaches both non-uniformed and uniformed personnel to handle finances effectively, which they can use in their personal lives because police duties remain challenging for officers who face financial difficulties. Though the program has its good intentions, it has faced persistent challenges, particularly when it comes to getting officers to participate and be involved in the program wholeheartedly. The present program fails to drive officers toward financial management because Macalalag (2021) reports that officers do not show enough interest in the program. People continue to participate in workshops and seminars because they need to meet attendance requirements even though they do not actually want to enhance their financial management skills. The program needs to explore alternative methods that will make the program more interesting and useful for police personnel who experience their work activities in their daily operations. The program faces a major challenge because most police officers fail to connect the financial education material to their everyday life and work environment. Financial literacy programs teach students about credit card management, mortgage loan handling, and long-term investment strategies.

The subjects presented here hold significance, yet they might not help officers who struggle with their current financial challenges, which include managing their budget when their income varies and handling money-related issues that affect their family life. The program faces challenges in reaching its goals because its content fails to connect with participants. Police Officers in rural areas face some challenges and problems that may make it harder for them to apply the knowledge of financial education programs that they learn during training to their everyday lives. This situation is even more obvious, particularly in Benguet, located in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR). The financial literacy of police officers receives special attention through the unique case of Benguet. The Benguet Provincial Police Office (BPPO) is in charge of 13 Municipal Police Stations and 1,374 Police Officers. But a report from the BPPO in 2022 says that a lot of officers stationed in Benguet are having trouble with their finances. Public servants fail to demonstrate adequate financial knowledge, which hinders their ability to make sound monetary decisions, although they must protect citizens through honest actions.

The financial insecurity experienced by police officers in Benguet is driven by both individual and structural factors, as documented in BPPO reports showing inadequate financial management skills compounded by the unique barriers of rural and remote assignments. Geographic isolation limits access to banks, cooperatives, investment opportunities, and formal financial education programs, restricting officers' exposure to contemporary financial tools such as savings instruments, investment options, and retirement planning systems and forcing reliance on informal or traditional schemes. This lack of access and financial education constrains informed decision-making, weakens long-term financial planning, and heightens financial stress, which in turn adversely affects officers' personal well-being, work efficiency, judgment, and overall organizational performance within the police service.

Police officers who serve in Benguet lack both financial knowledge and sufficient resources when compared to their urban counterparts. They face difficulties when creating financial plans because of limited official programs that teach money management skills, while numerous unofficial financial systems operate through *paluwagan* and *bayanihan* systems. These systems function as emergency response tools, but they do not assist in saving money, investing, or retirement planning. People in rural areas like Benguet use traditional ways of doing things with money, such as *bayanihan paluwagan,* which is widely and commonly used even inside government offices. People use these methods for their daily needs, but these unofficial systems depend on mutual trust between people who assist each other, which sometimes results in deceptive practices that create financial problems because they fail to provide the stable financial

protection that banks offer. Also, police personnel can be at risk of being the victim of a scam and losing their money when they use informal financial systems like these, especially when they are promised quick returns on investments (Akerlof, 2010). The scams aim at people who face money problems when they need to assess investment worth based on their assets. Police officers are especially vulnerable to these kinds of financial schemes, especially when they are already stressed out by their money problems, which can lead to more debt and financial hardship (Joo & Grable, 2004).

These systems create a debt cycle that results in financial instability and prevents police officers from building retirement security, according to Garman and Forgue (2019). Hence, police officers need to know how to save and invest for the future as well as how to handle their money (Joo & Grable, 2004) and use modern financial tools and techniques (Atkinson & Messy, 2012). The Philippine National Police Finance Service (PNPFS) recognized the difficulties and problems of police officers and the need for the PNP to improve its knowledge with regard to financial matters and initiated the Financial Literacy Program in 2017. The program provided police officers with essential financial management skills, which included teaching them to save money, create budgets, invest their funds, and plan their retirement. The program is more beneficial to police officers serving in rural areas, such as Benguet, because financial problems will likely result in burnout and mental exhaustion, which affect work performance (Barling et al.,2017), and unethical behavior, which can damage the police officers' reputation and reduce public trust (Simpson & Prentice, 2019).

However, the continuing financial issues in remote areas suggest that the PNPFS Financial Literacy Program must be modified so that it will meet the needs of officers who work in places like Benguet. The program exists to support police officers in their financial management, but it should concentrate on addressing the specific budgeting difficulties that rural and low-income police officers' encounter. Moreover, the program needs to distribute its available funds toward supporting police officers who serve in remote areas for their individual financial needs. The program should teach them to handle their money through learning budgeting techniques for low-income and debt control and building emergency savings. It should also provide rural police personnel with access to financial services through an obstacle-free process. This might include teaching officers how to utilize mobile banking apps, opening a savings account, and receiving financial services with the use of modern equipment like computer applications. Digital financial instruments have become more important because they fulfill vital requirements in regions that do not have enough banking services. The financial management skills of rural police officers will improve through their education on these tools because they will learn to create future.

In addition, the PNPFS Financial Literacy Program should be used more hands-on and interactive ways to teach. It should present authentic police stories together with financial achievement stories from law enforcement personnel who successfully handled their money. The initiative might also offer rewards to officers who show that they are committed to improving their financial literacy in order to get more people involved. The program should provide officers who succeed with opportunities, such as receiving certificates and promotions, and other forms of recognition. They should also be allowed to teach other officers in their areas about money management. The peer-led education method enables police personnel to build their self-assurance through questioning and thought-sharing activities, to establish a secure, positive learning environment.

Digital platforms such as Zoom and Google Meet play a critical role in strengthening financial literacy training for Philippine National Police (PNP) personnel, particularly in geographically isolated areas of Benguet where travel to the Provincial Police Office is difficult and costly. By enabling flexible, self-paced, and remote learning through video tutorials and online courses, these platforms address accessibility barriers while supporting the objectives of the PNP Financial Education and Literacy Program (PNP-FinLit), which seeks to improve budgeting, saving, debt management, and investing skills among police officers. Grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior and Financial Literacy Theory, the program recognizes that effective financial education must simultaneously enhance knowledge, shape positive attitudes, strengthen social and organizational support, and build officers' confidence in applying financial skills. Integrating digital delivery mechanisms with context-sensitive content allows PNP-FinLit to respond to Benguet's unique terrain, limited access to financial institutions, and varied perceptions of financial education, ultimately promoting reduced financial stress, improved job performance, and long-term financial stability among police personnel.

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This study seeks to fill the gap in understanding how effective the current financial literacy programs are for PNP personnel in Benguet. The research examines how these officers handle their financial resources, their debt obligations, their investment choices, and their ability to use acquired knowledge in their regular activities, taking into account their cultural background and their ability to obtain financial products. The study investigated police financial practices across different command levels to determine their actual money needs by analyzing their current financial training programs, and their financial needs through an assessment of their existing financial education program to deliver complete information about their requirements to identify successful financial education approaches and unsuccessful methods, while creating suitable methods to teach essential financial information to Benguet police personnel. The study hopes to contribute new knowledge about financial literacy's positive impact on police officer health outcomes and work performance in rural Benguet and similar areas. It aims to improve police financial stability while reducing workplace stress because it will help police officers maintain their ability to protect their community through financial assistance programs. In the study, the Philippine National Police (PNP) personnel refer to uniformed and non-uniformed members of law enforcement in Benguet Province, while police officers refer to a ranked, uniformed personnel.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive survey research design to examine the financial literacy levels, financial behaviors, and perceived program impacts among Philippine National Police (PNP) personnel assigned in the Province of Benguet, Cordillera Administrative Region, Philippines. Following ethical clearance and approval from the Cordillera Career Development College Research Ethics Committee (CCDC-REC), data were collected from a randomly selected sample of 100 active Police Non-Commissioned Officers and Police Commissioned Officers who had been assigned in Benguet for at least three months, as determined using Cochran's formula to ensure representativeness and minimize sampling bias; personnel on leave, suspended, retired, civilian employees, or those who declined participation were excluded. The primary data-gathering instrument was a structured survey questionnaire adapted and contextualized from validated financial literacy instruments developed by Lusardi and Mitchell (2014) and Potrich, Vieira, and Kirch (2015), which underwent expert validation for clarity and relevance and demonstrated excellent reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.947) based on a pilot test involving 21 non-participant PNP personnel from the Police Regional Office Cordillera.

Further, the questionnaire consisted of three sections covering respondents' demographic profile, level of financial knowledge, and perceived effects of the financial literacy program on financial habits, well-being, and job performance. Data was collected through both online and paper-based surveys, supplemented by selected in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to enrich understanding of participants' experiences and contextual challenges in applying financial knowledge. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency counts, weighted means, and Likert-scale interpretations, to assess financial knowledge before and after program participation and the extent of program impact on job performance and well-being, while qualitative data were thematically analyzed to identify dominant patterns. Artificial intelligence tools (QuillBot and ChatGPT) were utilized solely for grammatical, typographical, and stylistic refinement of the manuscript; all analyses, interpretations, and conclusions remain the sole responsibility of the researcher.

RESULT, ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results on the level of financial knowledge of the Philippine National Police (PNP) personnel in Benguet before and after participating in financial literacy programs, the impact of these programs on the job performance of the PNP personnel, and the discussions and analyses of these results.

Level of Financial Knowledge of the PNP Personnel in Benguet Before Participating in Financial Literacy Programs

Table 1 indicates that prior to participation in financial literacy programs, PNP personnel in Benguet demonstrated a moderate level of financial knowledge (overall weighted mean = 3.34), suggesting basic financial awareness with substantial room for improvement, particularly in systematic budgeting and deeper conceptual understanding. The highest-rated indicator, awareness of the effects of impulsive spending (weighted mean = 3.48), reflects strong recognition of how unplanned purchases can disrupt budgets, reduce savings, and increase financial stress, aligning with the Theory of Planned Behavior which posits that attitudes and perceived behavioral control shape responsible actions. This heightened awareness shows that many officers already exercise self-discipline in resisting impulsive purchases and prioritizing family needs, work-related expenses, and emergency savings, providing a strong foundation

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upon which targeted and sustained financial literacy interventions can further strengthen prudent financial decision-making.

Additionally, studies on the financial habits of police officers reveal that being financially literate is quite important in learning how to manage money well. Recent studies show that police officers and other public servants who are financially literate are more likely to make smart financial decisions. The research by Hurley et al. (2025) showed that Philippine National Police officers fail to manage finances because they received no education about budgeting. The research findings show that financial education programs should concentrate on particular subjects for their content. Sathar and Bajpai (2025), who studied the Kerala, India police staff, found that financial literacy directly enhances their ability to save money. The officers who understood money management better tended to save their money through scheduled savings, and they used established financial planning methods. These results show how important it is to improve financial literacy in order to encourage better financial habits among police officers.

Another research by Apostol et al. (2025) found that financial literacy leads to enhanced savings practices and better retirement readiness, and supports the enduring benefits of financial education. The study also shows that police officers who learn about finance will reach better financial stability because they will spend less money and save more. All experts agree that financial education requires immediate action because it creates enduring benefits for police officers' well-being and happiness. The statement "I pay my debts and loans on time," with a weighted mean of 3.45, rated as "highly knowledgeable," shows that most PNP personnel are responsible for managing their debt. They know how to handle their finances in terms of paying their bills on time. Since many PNP personnel in Benguet already show this level of responsibility, financial literacy education programs should already focus on topics such as investments, savings, and long-term financial planning, including planning for their retirement.

Table 1. Level of financial knowledge of the PNP personnel before participating in financial literacy programs

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. I know how to create and stick to a personal budget.	3.14	Moderately Knowledgeable	7
2. I have a good understanding of basic financial concepts (e.g., budgeting, saving, investing).	3.150	Moderately Knowledgeable	6
3. I keep a list of expenses to ensure I stay within my budget.	3.37	Moderately Knowledgeable	5
4. I save a part of my salary for future plans (e.g., schooling for promotion).	3.38	Moderately Knowledgeable	4
5. I save a part of my salary for future goals.	3.39	Moderately Knowledgeable	3
6. I pay my debts and loans on time.	3.45	Highly Knowledgeable	2
7. I am aware of the effect of spending money impulsively.	3.48	Highly Knowledgeable	1
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.34**	**Moderately Knowledgeable**	

As pointed out in the theory of planned behavior (Aizen, 1991), social norms together with available resources determine how people manage their financial activities, including debt repayment timeliness. Police officers know that paying back on time shows discipline, honesty, and responsibility. These are all important values for police officer especially since Cordilleran police officers are being tagged as one of the country's most disciplined officers. In terms of debt payment, the Auto Debit Arrangement (ADA) functions as a payment system that allows customers to make their loan payments automatically through direct transactions. The system functions through direct payment amount extraction from police officer salaries before standard monthly pay processing occurs. The payment system enables police officers to meet their deadlines for financial obligations, although they continue to fulfill their monetary responsibilities. For instance, a police officer in Benguet who has an active loan from a cooperative or lending institution makes sure that payments are made on time, even if they are working in a remote area or have a lot of work to do. This sense of duty not only helps keep their credit score high, but it also shows that they are professionals and have a strong moral character. PNP members must fulfill their loan repayment obligations because this practice demonstrates their organizational discipline and their wish to demonstrate positive behavior to their colleagues and the people they serve.

The lowest indicators include “I know how to create and stick to a personal budget” with a weighted mean of 3.14, “I have a good understanding of basic financial concepts" with a weighted mean of 3.15, and "I keep a list of expenses to make sure I stay within my budget" with a weighted mean of 3.37. These indicators show that many PNP personnel still need to work on their budgeting and overall financial management skills. The results show that even though the police officers are good at paying their bills, they still have trouble planning, keeping track of, and managing their money every day. This shows that they need more targeted financial literacy programs that teach people how to manage their own finances, make their budget, and keep track of their spending. Financial Literacy Theory (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014) says that good money management starts with knowing the basics, like how to save, budget, and invest. But in reality, a lot of police officers in Benguet have trouble keeping track of their daily expenses or sticking to a budget, having to pay for things they did not expect, having to take care of family members, or having to work in remote areas where it is hard to get to financial tools and services.

Police officers assigned to rural stations in Benguet face irregular and often unpredictable expenses that complicate budgeting and expense tracking, such as higher fuel and food costs for travel to Camp Dangwa in La Trinidad, the use of personal funds for new assignments, and sudden expenditures related to emergencies, disasters, or community outreach. Officers reported difficulty monitoring where their salaries go, especially those supporting families outside the province, as small but frequent daily expenses—such as snacks during patrols, coffee, food deliveries, online purchases, and unplanned market stops—accumulate into significant financial drains in the absence of written budgets or expense-tracking systems. Although the data show that PNP personnel generally act responsibly with their finances, the findings highlight gaps in financial planning skills, underscoring the need for continuous enhancement of financial literacy programs that emphasize practical, context-specific budgeting strategies such as expense listing, paycheck allocation, and automatic savings to help officers in Benguet achieve more stable and sustainable income management.

Level of Financial Knowledge of the PNP Personnel in Benguet After Participation in Financial Literacy Programs

Table 2 shows the level of financial knowledge of the PNP personnel in Benguet after participating in financial literacy programs. The overall weighted mean of 3.57, described as "highly knowledgeable," shows that the PNP personnel in Benguet learned a lot about financial management and changed their behavior after taking the financial literacy training. This means that the financial literacy programs did a good job of filling in the gaps and helping them make better financial decisions. The results also suggest that continuing to use the same training can make people even better at managing money and improve the organization's financial culture. Before the training, many police officers said they did not know much about important financial concepts like budgeting, saving, and managing debt. They often make poor financial choices because of what their peers or friends did or said. This sometimes led to borrowing money or spending too much. But after the training, the people who took part said they had a better idea of how to handle their money wisely. A lot of police officers started using what they learned to make monthly budgets, keep track of their spending, pay off their debts in order of importance, and always save money. This change in behavior shows that these programs not only made police officers more aware of managing their finances, but they also helped them develop habits that will help them stay financially secure.

The three most important indicators are "I feel more confident making financial decisions" with a weighted mean of 3.60, "I feel more responsible in managing my debt" with a weighted mean of 3.59, and "I am now more careful about my spending and avoid impulsive purchases" with a weighted mean of 3.58. These results show that the PNP personnel in Benguet Province are much more aware of handling their finances in their daily lives. Additionally, the results show more than just an increase in financial knowledge; they also show changes in attitude, responsibility, perception, and how people make decisions in terms of financial aspects. Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior says that a person's knowledge, attitudes, intentions, and perceived control all affect their behavior. In this case, the training provided a strong foundation for these characteristics and provided a strong foundation, making the police officers more aware of their financial decisions and making them more responsible.

For example, a police officer at the La Trinidad Municipal Police Station said that before the training, he would quickly take out personal loans whenever he saw ads or heard about "easy approval" offers from lending companies. But after the program, he now takes the time to compare cooperative and bank loans, looking for the best interest rates and payment terms before making a choice. Another police officer stationed in Bakun Municipal Police Station, which has a few banks and other financial institutions, also learned how to use online banking tools and mobile apps to save

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money and pay bills. This kept him from having to make unnecessary trips to La Trinidad, the provincial capital, where he would normally go just to pay his bills. This saved him money on both food and transportation. Another police officer in Atok police station started saving a specific amount from his salary after completing financial literacy training. The training showed him how emergency funds help with car repairs and medical expenses. These financial literacy programs showed police officers in Benguet how to use their financial management skills in actual police work situations. This newfound confidence in making independent and well-considered financial decisions reflects an important behavioral shift described in the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), particularly the component of perceived behavioral control, the belief in one's ability to successfully carry out a behavior. People will make responsible decisions that match their personal objectives when they demonstrate strong confidence in their financial decision-making abilities. The PNP personnel who work in Benguet need to develop their ability to refuse loans they do not need, and select appropriate financial options, creating suitable plans.

Table 2. Level of financial knowledge of PNP personnel after participating in financial literacy programs

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. I feel more confident making financial decisions.	3.60	Highly Knowledgeable	1
2. I feel more responsible for managing my debt.	3.59	Highly Knowledgeable	2
3. I am now more careful about my spending and avoid impulsive purchases.	3.58	Highly Knowledgeable	3
4. I have a clearer plan for saving for future goals.	3.57	Highly Knowledgeable	4
5. I regularly track my spending and adjust my budget as needed.	3.56	Highly Knowledgeable	5
6. I now have a better understanding of basic financial concepts.	3.54	Highly Knowledgeable	6
7. I am now able to create and stick to a personal budget more effectively.	3.52	Highly Knowledgeable	7
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.57**	**Highly Knowledgeable**	

The second-highest-rated statement, "I feel more responsible in managing my debt," a weighted mean of 3.59, shows that the PNP personnel assigned in Benguet have become much more responsible and disciplined when it comes to paying bills. The financial literacy programs achieved success because participants learned effective loan and debt management skills, forming the basis for reaching permanent financial security. Police officers in Benguet must take loans to purchase essential items for their family members, their education, home maintenance, medical care, and required training expenses. The police officers reported before starting the program that they would occasionally lose track of payment deadlines while making only the required minimum payments. They also need to pay additional interest charges while their payroll deductions increased, which reduced their available earnings. People use these actions to manage their debt because they only respond to debt problems after they occur, instead of creating a planned debt repayment system.

Research results demonstrate that financial literacy stands as a vital skill. The PNP personnel need to understand debt management because it results in improved accountability following their training. Research by Cabueñas et al. (2025) discovered that individuals who possess financial management abilities tend to fulfill their loan obligations without delay while preventing any associated penalties. This is similar to the better repayment discipline that police officers are showing now. Additionally, Carvajal et al. (2025) found a strong link between financial knowledge and active debt management, showing that knowing more about money leads to better and more responsible ways of paying back

debts. Moreover, the findings of the study support the research conducted by Salas-Velasco (2022), where they found that financial education improved both financial understanding and personal confidence, resulting in better financial choices. Furthermore, Brown et al. (2016) showed that financial education programs enable people to stay away from risky loans while they develop their ability to make timely loan payments. This is supported by the research by Fernandes et al. (2024), validating the study because it shows that financial education leads to effective money management and improved debt control among different social groups.

The findings indicate that the improved debt management and more disciplined spending behaviors of PNP personnel are direct outcomes of their participation in financial literacy training, as officers became more proactive in tracking loan obligations, monitoring salary deductions, understanding debt-to-income limits, and avoiding impulsive borrowing and spending. Guided by the Theory of Planned Behavior, these changes reflect strengthened subjective norms and perceived behavioral control within the PNP culture of discipline and accountability, as evidenced by a high weighted mean (3.58) for careful spending behavior, showing that the program influenced not only financial knowledge but also daily financial decisions, self-control, and practical money management, even in challenging contexts such as remote assignments in Benguet.

Another police officer said that he avoids buying new motorcycle accessories monthly and chose to save this money for his child's education because he recognized the importance of savings. People now use mobile applications, together with budgeting applications, to track their daily expenses. Furthermore, the police officers now base their spending decisions on financial understanding instead of using their entire budget to purchase everything they want. They choose their purchases based on value assessment because they acquired financial evaluation skills. The financial literacy programs, therefore, showed participants how to handle their spending through educational content. People who can stop themselves from making impulse purchases show better self-regulation abilities, which form the basis of financial management. These people can select better financial options after learning money management skills because they understand how their current spending decisions impact their future financial condition, according to the financial literacy theory (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014).

Police officers assigned to remote municipalities such as Buguias, Bakun, and Atok face distinct financial challenges due to higher living and transportation costs, making disciplined budgeting and intentional spending essential; following the financial literacy training, PNP personnel demonstrated improved control over impulsive spending, greater awareness of how daily expenses affect their financial stability, and stronger prioritization of essential needs, debt repayment, and savings, thereby reducing financial strain and allowing better focus on professional and family responsibilities. The findings indicate that the program produced practical behavioral changes and increased confidence and discipline in money management; however, despite remaining within the highly knowledgeable range, lower mean scores for understanding basic financial concepts and consistently creating and adhering to personal budgets suggest persistent difficulties in applying abstract financial knowledge to real-life situations. Officers acknowledged improved familiarity with concepts such as interest rates, debt-to-income ratios, and investment options, yet many still struggle to compute or operationalize these concepts due to contextual constraints including irregular expenses, family obligations, and the high cost of living in mountainous communities, underscoring the need for sustained, hands-on, and context-specific financial literacy training.

Consistent with Financial Literacy Theory (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014), the findings show that while financial literacy training improved officers' knowledge, attitudes, and intentions toward budgeting, sustained application remains challenging due to irregular duty schedules, unexpected operational and family expenses, and limited income flexibility. The lowest-rated indicator on consistently creating and adhering to a personal budget highlights the need for continuous mentoring, follow-up sessions, and activity-based learning—such as practical budgeting exercises, loan comparisons, and real-life simulations—to translate financial knowledge into durable, disciplined financial habits despite external constraints.

Extent of Impact of Financial Literacy Programs on the Job Performance and Well-being of the PNP Personnel in Benguet

Table 3 indicates that the financial literacy programs had a high impact on the job performance and well-being of PNP personnel in Benguet, as reflected by an overall weighted mean of 3.51, demonstrating that the training produced benefits beyond improved money management. The findings show that enhanced financial decision-making reduced financial stress, strengthened emotional and mental well-being, and improved work focus and productivity, with the

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well-being dimension registering a high effect (weighted mean = 3.49). The highest-rated indicator, "I feel more hopeful and confident about my future financial situation" (weighted mean = 3.52), underscores a positive shift in officers' outlook toward their financial future, particularly among those assigned in rural and mountainous areas where fixed incomes, family obligations, and limited resources previously made financial planning difficult. Overall, the results confirm that financial literacy training contributed to greater financial control, psychological stability, and improved professional functioning among PNP personnel in Benguet.

The statement "I have better relationships with my family because I manage my money better," with a weighted mean of 3.51. This means that the training on financial literacy had a positive effect not only on the financial habits of PNP personnel in Benguet, but also on their relationships with their family and the overall atmosphere at home. The programs helped people see that money problems are not just about money; they are also about family communication, trust, and emotional connection. A common source of tension at home shared by many police officers before the training was financial stress, due dates, unexpected expenses, and debt obligations, thus caused misunderstandings or arguments, especially when due dates are near, but payday is still far. A police officer from Mankayan admitted that he used to argue with his wife when they did not have enough money to sustain them until the next payday. The pressure of needing to make both ends meet and to address their financial obligations made them both irritable and anxious. After taking the training, they learned to communicate about money transparently, and they created a simple household budget, discussed priorities, and laid out family goals to be able to save, especially for their child's education. These small but consistent changes reduced conflicts and helped solidify their marriage, thus creating a happy home.

Table 3. Extent of impact of financial literacy programs on the job performance and well-being of the PNP personnel in Benguet

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Well-Being	**3.49**		
1. I feel more hopeful and confident about my future financial situation.	3.52	High Effect	1
2. I have improved relationships with my family due to better financial management.	3.51	High Effect	2
3. I feel more financially secure and stable after the training.	3.49	High Effect	3
4. I am more satisfied with my overall quality of life.	3.48	High Effect	4
5. My stress or anxiety related to money has decreased.	3.46	High Effect	5
Job Performance	**3.53**		
1. The financial literacy programs helped me focus better on my job duties.	3.55	High Effect	1
2. I became more productive and less distracted by financial worries at work.	3.54	High Effect	2.5
3. I feel more motivated and confident in performing my responsibilities.	3.54	High Effect	2.5
4. I experienced less stress that interfered with my job performance.	3.52	High Effect	4
5. I can manage my time better because of improved financial planning.	3.51	High Effect	5
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.51**	**High Effect**	

A policewoman assigned to Buguias Municipal Police Station shared that she now involves her teenage children in basic budgeting tasks like listing grocery items and tracking utility bills, and according to her, by doing that, her children developed a better appreciation and awareness of the family's financial situation and became more understanding about avoiding unnecessary expenses. This lessened not only her financial stress but also created a team spirit and sense of shared responsibility within the household. These examples show that financial literacy is not only about learning to save or budget, but also contributes to the stability of their own families. When officers learned to manage their money responsibly, they became more transparent and communicative with their loved ones, thus financial discussions, earlier a source of conflict, became opportunities for cooperation and decision-making together. Improved financial management resulted in fewer arguments, more trust, and a more tranquil and supportive atmosphere at home.

This finding strengthens the idea that financial stability promotes emotional stability because when money is handled wisely, peace and understanding follow, and this contributes not only to the personal well-being of PNP personnel but also to the overall strength and harmony of their families. The indicator "I feel more financially secure and stable after the training," with a weighted mean of 3.49, recommends that the financial literacy training made the PNP personnel in Benguet more aware of their financial stability, thus making them more in control of their personal finances. Many police officers testified that they finally felt secure in their future after learning to plan, manage, and prepare for financial challenges. Before the training, unexpected expenses like motorcycle repairs, medical emergencies, or gas expenses during official duties drove them to borrow money from colleagues, a lending institution, or a cooperative. These were recurring situations that created stress and uncertainty about their financial future, thus affecting their job performance as an enforcer.

However, after the training, officers started to apply what they learned: save, budget, and create an emergency fund, and many of the participants expressed that they now regularly set aside a small portion of their salary every payday, even if the amount is small. For example, a police officer serving in Atok, a place considered mountainous and thus has expensive travel costs, reported that whenever his motorcycle breaks down, he always borrows from a colleague. After the training, he promised himself that he would save up some money from his salary for unexpected emergencies. After several months, when he needed to have another repair in his motorcycle, he proudly used his own money instead of borrowing, which gave him a sense of relief, dignity, and independence. A policewoman assigned to Bakun Municipal Police Station expressed that since she had learned how to save consistently, she felt more comfortable with herself, knowing that if something unexpected came up, she had something to fall back on. She claimed that her worries had somehow lessened because an emergency fund made her more focused on her duties.

These real-life experiences clearly revealed the financial literacy theory (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014) in action that putting into continuous practice the knowledge of finances develops confidence and emotional security. To be able to predict and prepare for financial needs accurately suggests that their financial status has become more advanced, and peace and self-respect. Eventually, this feeling of stability contributes to their well-being. It epitomizes the success of the financial literacy training in inculcating practical, long-term financial resiliency among PNP personnel in Benguet. The results under “job performance,” with an overall weighted mean of 3.53, and interpreted as “high effect,” show that the positive impact of the financial literacy training program went beyond the PNP personnel's personal well-being in Benguet and extended to their professional performance. Based on their testimony, financial stability and awareness significantly enhanced their ability to concentrate and be more productive with the motivation to work.

Many police officers acknowledged that before the training, they were occasionally unfocused during their duties because of financial problems such as debts, bills, or a lack of savings that weighed heavily on their minds. These financial concerns also drove them to states of fatigue, irritability, and a loss of focus, especially in extended hours of operations or administrative tasks. By contrast, after being subjected to proper budgeting, management of debts, and prioritization in spending, the stress brought by finances was minimized, and thus the officers could perform with a clearer mind and sharper focus. The first highest indicator is "The financial literacy program helped me focus better on my job duties," with a weighted mean of 3.55. This suggests that the training had a big impact on the attentiveness and work performance of PNP personnel in Benguet. The same concern was expressed by many when asked about how they would often get distracted from work due to money-related problems. Some participants confessed, "Sometimes, even at work, my mind couldn't help but wander, thinking of bills I still had to pay, loans, and due dates."

The findings indicate that improved financial management following financial literacy training significantly enhanced the focus, productivity, and professional engagement of PNP personnel in Benguet, as reduced financial stress allowed officers to concentrate more effectively on their duties. Officers reported that prior to the training, persistent worries about debts, bills, and loan deductions distracted them during briefings, operations, and administrative tasks; however, after learning to budget, prioritize expenses, and implement structured debt repayment and saving plans, they experienced greater mental clarity, motivation, and confidence at work. This positive change is reflected in the indicator "I became more productive and less distracted by financial worries at work" (weighted mean = 3.54), demonstrating a meaningful impact of financial literacy on job performance. Consistent with the Theory of Planned Behavior, increased perceived control over personal finances improved officers' attitudes and behaviors toward work, enabling them—particularly those assigned to remote and mountainous areas of Benguet—to manage job demands more effectively, remain focused under pressure, and achieve higher levels of professional fulfillment.

The third highest score, "I feel more motivated and confident in performing my responsibilities," with a weighted mean of 3.54, shows that the financial literacy training gave PNP personnel in Benguet not only financial knowledge but also a new sense of drive, self-confidence, and self-assurance in their work. Having a steady income made them feel better about their jobs, which made them more motivated and happier at work. Before the training, many officers said that being under constant financial stress, like not having enough savings, having unpaid bills, and having to support their families, often made them feel down and drained, which hurt their job performance, which is keeping the public safe. Some police officers said that even when they were working, they could not stop worrying about their money problems. Because of this, they were not as focused on their work. But after the training, officers learned how to manage their money better, like making a budget, paying off debts from highest interest to lowest, and saving money regularly. These new habits helped them get their finances back under control, which made them feel good about themselves and gave them a sense of power. A police officer who worked in Mankayan said that after finally paying off a long-term loan, he felt like a huge weight had been lifted off his shoulders. He said it felt like "finally being free," and this freedom made him want to work harder and be more dedicated to his job.

A policewoman from Buguias Municipal Police Station said the same thing. Since she started saving money regularly and planning how to spend it, she feels more confident and focused at work because she doesn't have to worry about money problems at home. She can work harder and with a clearer mind now that she knows her personal life is stable financially. This result is a clear example of how being financially stable can help you work harder and be more professional. The financial literacy theory (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014) says that people feel better about themselves, are more focused, and believe they can do things when they learn how to handle their own money. These are all important qualities for doing a good job. The training taught officers how to be responsible with their money and hold themselves accountable, which is the same kind of discipline and responsibility they need to have on the job. The theory of planned behavior (Aizen, 1991) also backs this up. It says that people are more likely to do well in other areas when they feel like they have control over important parts of their lives, like their money. These show that giving police officers structured financial education is a good way to give them more power. The PNP personnel can make their employees more financially stable, resilient, and motivated by teaching them about money as part of their professional development. This group of people will be able to make smart financial choices, keep their personal lives stable, and do their jobs better and more efficiently.

Summary of Findings

The following are the major findings of the study: Before participating in financial literacy training programs, the Philippines National Police (PNP) personnel in Benguet were highly knowledgeable of the effect of spending money impulsively, and paying debts and loans on time, but moderately knowledgeable about saving money for plans and goals, keeping a list of expenses to ensure that they stay on budget, basic financial concepts such as budgeting, savings, and investing), and creating and sticking to a personal budget. Next, after participating in financial literacy training programs, the PNP personnel in Benguet became highly knowledgeable on financial management, particularly on making financial decisions, managing debt, being careful about spending, avoiding impulsive purchases, and creating and sticking to a budget more effectively. Lastly, financial literacy training programs had a high impact on the PNP personnel in Benguet in terms of their job performance and well-being. In particular, it helped them focus better on their job, becoming more productive and less distracted by financial worries at work, and more motivated and confident in performing their responsibilities. In terms of their well-being, they became more hopeful and confident about their future financial situation, more financially secure and stable, and their relationship with their family improved with improved financial management.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In this section, the conclusions and recommendations are presented based on the major findings of the study.

Conclusions

The study concludes that while Philippine National Police personnel in Benguet already demonstrated basic responsible financial behaviors prior to training, structural and contextual constraints—particularly work location and limited access to financial services—hampered consistent budgeting and saving. Participation in the financial literacy programs significantly enhanced officers' financial knowledge, decision-making capacity, and money management skills, which in turn reduced financial stress and contributed to improved job performance, focus, productivity, and overall well-being, including better family relationships.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion drawn from the study, the following recommendations are proposed: it is recommended that the Philippine National Police institutionalize financial literacy programs as a regular and mandatory component of training, career development, and pre-promotion requirements, supported by sustained partnerships with credible financial institutions and government agencies to deliver context-sensitive and practical learning. Program design should emphasize interactive, experience-based approaches, continuous monitoring through refresher sessions, peer mentoring, and family-inclusive activities to reinforce behavioral change, while future research should expand to other regions, examine long-term impacts, and develop a PNP-specific financial literacy framework responsive to the unique demands of police service.

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