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ASSESSING WORKLOAD OVERLOAD AMONG POLICE PERSONNEL: IMPLICATIONS FOR WELL-BEING, JOB PERFORMANCE, AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFICIENCY

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ABSTRACT

Police personnel operate in high-demand environments characterized by emergency response, administrative documentation, and community engagement. These layered responsibilities, compounded by resource constraints, generate workload overload that may undermine well-being, job performance, and organizational efficiency. This study examined the extent, correlates, and consequences of workload overload among Pampanga police officers using a quantitative, descriptive–correlational, cross-sectional survey (N = 385). A structured instrument (4-point Likert scale) assessed workload overload, well-being, job satisfaction/performance, organizational efficiency, and perceived contributors and remedies. Reliability indices for all subscales were acceptable (a = .82–.89). Descriptive statistics, Pearson's r, t-tests/ANOVA, and multiple regression were applied. Results indicate consistent agreement that officers experience task saturation, frequent multitasking due to staffing gaps, and extended hours (overall M = 3.12). Organizational factors (e.g., staff shortages, uneven task allocation, limited technology) significantly contribute to overload (M = 3.01) and correspond with lower job satisfaction (M = 2.95), diminished morale and well-being (M = 2.85), and perceived efficiency losses (M = 3.00). Demographic effects suggest higher strain among junior and female officers, and relatively better coping among more educated personnel. Findings align with JD-R (health-impairment and motivation pathways), JDC, COR, ERI, Role, and P–E Fit theories. Recommended reforms include manpower augmentation, digitalization of administrative tasks, supportive and fair supervision, wellness and resilience programming, and rank- and gender-sensitive workload management.

KEYWORDS: *Workload Overload; Police Personnel; Well-Being; Job Performance; Organizational Efficiency*

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary law enforcement, police personnel face increasingly complex and multifaceted demands that extend far beyond traditional patrol and investigative functions. Officers are now expected to perform an expanded range of duties—including emergency response, administrative documentation, and community relations—often under conditions of resource scarcity and intense public scrutiny. This convergence of responsibilities has intensified workload pressures, creating what scholar term "workload overload," or the perception that job demands exceed an individual's available time, resources, or capacity (Demou et al., 2020; Anders et al., 2024). Such overload is not merely operational but has profound implications for well-being, morale, and institutional performance within police organizations.

In the Philippine context, workload imbalance is a persistent organizational issue aggravated by limited manpower, outdated facilities, and bureaucratic inefficiencies (Wilson, J. M., & Grammich, C. A. 2024) Police officers frequently contend with extended shifts, redundant paperwork, and a shortage of administrative and logistical support, which collectively contribute to fatigue and declining motivation. Empirical research across various jurisdictions has established that chronic workload pressures elevate occupational stress and burnout, erode mental health, and reduce productivity (Baum et al., 2022; Parcon et al., 2023). However, limited localized studies have systematically examined how these conditions manifest within the Philippine National Police (PNP), particularly at the provincial level.

Preliminary literature from Espartero (2023) and Caballero et al. (2024) underscores the link between unclear job expectations, insufficient support, and job dissatisfaction among Filipino police personnel. Yet, comprehensive frameworks that integrate the psychological, organizational, and operational dimensions of workload overload remain scarce. This study thus responds to the need for empirical evidence grounded in Philippine policing realities—examining how workload overload influences police officers' well-being, job performance, and perceptions of organizational efficiency. Beyond assessing prevalence, it also seeks to identify structural and demographic factors that moderate these effects and to explore officers' preferred strategies for mitigating workload stress.

By situating the investigation within Pampanga Province—a representative urban–rural jurisdiction—the study aims to generate actionable insights for organizational reform and resource allocation in the PNP. Ultimately, understanding the lived realities of workload overload contributes not only to improving police welfare and operational efficiency but also to strengthening institutional resilience, accountability, and public trust.

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OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

General Objective

To examine the extent, correlates, and consequences of workload overload among police personnel in Pampanga Province.

Specific Objectives

1. To determine the extent and nature of workload overload among police personnel.
2. To identify organizational and operational factors contributing to workload imbalance.
3. To assess the relationship between workload overload and job satisfaction, morale and well-being, and organizational efficiency.
4. To determine differences in workload experiences according to selected demographic variables.
5. To identify strategies perceived by officers as effective in reducing workload stress.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative, descriptive–correlational design using a cross-sectional survey to determine the extent, correlates, and consequences of workload overload among police personnel in Pampanga. The quantitative approach was selected for its ability to produce measurable, generalizable data and to identify statistical relationships among variables such as workload, well-being, and job performance (Chen, P.-F. & Wu, L. 2022). The design allowed for simultaneous examination of multiple constructs within a single data-collection period, ensuring efficiency and consistency in measurement.

Locale of the Study

The research was conducted across selected police stations in the Province of Pampanga. The province was chosen due to its mix of urban and rural policing environments, accessibility to the researchers, and the cooperation of local law enforcement units. This setting provided a suitable context for analyzing workload dynamics reflective of both metropolitan and municipal operations.

Population and Sampling Technique

The target population comprised all active police personnel stationed in Pampanga. Given the operational constraints and varying duty schedules of police officers, convenience sampling was employed. While this non-probability technique limits generalizability, it enabled the inclusion of respondents who were readily available and willing to participate during the data-collection period. To mitigate sampling bias, researchers ensured representation across different ranks and assignments (patrol, administrative, and supervisory).

Using a 95 % confidence level and a 5 % margin of error, the required sample size was 385 respondents, computed through standard population-based statistical formulas. This number was deemed adequate to capture variability within the local police force while maintaining data reliability and feasibility.

Research Instrument

Data were gathered through a structured survey questionnaire composed of closed-ended items measured on a 4-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 4 = Strongly Agree). The instrument assessed four primary dimensions: workload overload, well-being, job performance, and organizational efficiency. Sample items included: “I am required to complete multiple tasks beyond my manageable capacity” and “My workload causes emotional exhaustion.”

The questionnaire underwent expert validation by criminology scholars and law-enforcement professionals to ensure content relevance and clarity. A pilot test was administered to a small group of officers outside the study locale, and Cronbach’s alpha coefficients (ranging = 0.82–0.89) confirmed acceptable internal consistency and reliability for all subscales.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion: Active Pampanga police officers with at least one year of service, 21-56 years old, familiarity with workload management, and voluntary informed consent.

Exclusion: Officers on leave, those without relevant workload experience, or those unwilling to participate.

Data Gathering Procedure

A formal request letter approved by the research adviser, Assistant Dean, and Dean of the College of Criminal Justice Education was submitted to the Chiefs of Police of selected stations in Angeles City, Magalang Pampanga and Mabalacat City. Upon approval, questionnaires were administered to available and willing police personnel, while others completed the survey through Google Forms with informed consent. Respondents were assured of anonymity and informed of their right to withdraw. Data collection lasted approximately four weeks, and all responses were encoded and analyzed using SPSS.

Data Analysis

Data were coded, tabulated, and analyzed using SPSS Version 26**.** Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to summarize the demographic profile of respondents and the extent of workload overload**.** Pearson’s r was employed to determine the relationship between workload overload and job satisfaction, morale and well-being, and organizational efficiency. Independent-samples *t*-tests and one-way ANOVA were used to examine differences in workload experiences when grouped according to selected demographic variables. Statistical significance was set at $p < .05$**.**

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to ethical guidelines for research involving human participants. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents, and participation was voluntary. Data were anonymized and stored in password-protected files accessible only to the researchers. All protocols complied with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (RA 10173), and ethical clearance was secured under IREC Approval Code.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table
Table 1
Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 385)

Variable	Category	f	%
Age	21–29 years	228	59.2
	30–39 years	110	28.6
	40–49 years	46	11.9
	50 years and above	1	0.3
Sex	Male	267	69.4
	Female	118	30.6
Rank	Patrolman/Patrolwoman	260	67.5
	Police Corporal	49	12.7
	Staff Sergeant	33	8.6
	Master Sergeant and above	43	11.2

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the 385 police personnel who participated in the study. The majority were aged 20–29 years (59.2%), male (69.4%), and held the rank of Patrolman/Patrolwoman (67.5%).

The dominance of young, frontline officers indicates exposure to high operational intensity and limited control—conditions that align with the Job Demand–Control (JDC) Model. Younger and lower-ranking personnel typically face high workloads with minimal decision latitude, predisposing them to stress and fatigue (Demerouti & Bakker, 2023).

Table 2: Extent and Nature of Workload Overload

Table 2
Extent and Nature of Workload Overload

Indicator	M	SD	Interpretation
Excessive tasks beyond manageable capacity	3.70	0.91	Strongly Agree
Frequent multitasking due to limited staff	3.17	0.83	Agree
Extended working hours	3.15	0.86	Agree
Non-core administrative duties interfere	3.07	0.86	Agree
Unexpected tasks disrupt workflow	3.01	0.92	Agree
Overall Mean	3.12	0.87	Agree

Table 2 shows that police personnel generally agreed that workload overload affects their work (M = 3.12). The highest mean item "I have more tasks than I can complete within my shift" (M = 3.70)—indicates severe task overload, while multitasking due to limited staffing (M = 3.17*) and extended working hours (M = 3.15*) were also frequent.

These findings confirm the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model, where persistent demands without proportional resources lead to burnout and reduced efficiency. Studies by Otto & Gatens (2022) and Demou et al. (2020) similarly reported that workload imbalance impairs responsiveness and well-being. The pattern observed here underscores the need for task specialization and digitalization to alleviate cognitive strain and improve focus on core policing duties.

Table 3: Organizational and Operational Factors

Table 3
Contributing Organizational and Operational Factors

Indicator	M	SD	Interpretation
Staff shortages increase workload	3.02	0.85	Agree
Lack of technology complicates tasks	3.02	0.86	Agree
Uneven task distribution	3.02	0.89	Agree
Excessive administrative work	3.02	0.85	Agree
Poor communication or duplication of work	3.02	0.83	Agree
Overall Mean	3.01	0.87	Agree

Respondents agreed that organizational inefficiencies significantly contribute to workload imbalance (M = 3.01*). Table 3 shows that staff shortages, uneven task distribution, and limited technological resources were among the top stressors.

These results align with the Effort–Reward Imbalance (ERI) Theory, which explains that when employees exert disproportionate effort with minimal institutional support, dissatisfaction and burnout follow. Consistent with Anders et al. (2024) and Gomes, Ribeiro & Gomes (2022), manpower shortages and weak task monitoring emerge as systemic sources

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of inefficiency. Strengthening supervision and equitable workload management are thus essential to improving organizational efficiency.

Table 4: Correlation Between Workload Overload and Key Outcomes

Table 4

Workload Overload and Its Impact on Outcomes

Variable	Pearson r	p-value	Interpretation
Job Satisfaction	.154	.002	Significant relationship
Morale and Well-Being	.343	< .001	Moderate significant relationship
Organizational Efficiency	.471	< .001	Moderate to strong significant relationship
Perceived Organizational Support	.143	.005	Significant relationship

Table 4 presents the relationship between workload overload and key outcomes among police personnel. The results show that workload overload has a significant relationship with job satisfaction ($r = .154$, $p = .002$), morale and well-being ($r = .343$, $p < .001$), organizational efficiency ($r = .471$, $p < .001$), and perceived organizational support ($r = .143$, $p = .005$).

These findings support the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model, which explains that excessive job demands are associated with reduced well-being and organizational performance. The results are consistent with previous studies showing that high workload negatively affects police officers' satisfaction, morale, and work efficiency.

Table 5: Workload and Job Satisfaction

Table 5

Workload and Job Satisfaction

Indicator	M	SD	Interpretation
Diminished satisfaction with leadership	3.54	0.94	Agree
Reduced opportunities for growth	3.05	0.89	Agree
Heavy workload lowers morale	2.90	0.87	Agree
Frequent overtime reduces contentment	2.85	0.92	Agree
Overall Mean	2.95	0.90	Agree

Table 5 illustrates how excessive workload undermines officers' job satisfaction ($M = 2.95$*). The most significant concern was reduced satisfaction with leadership support ($M = 3.54$*).

These results support JD-R's motivation pathway, which links resource scarcity to declining enthusiasm and morale. They also confirm Parcon et al. (2023) and Demou et al. (2020) who reported that heavy workload diminishes job satisfaction in law enforcement. Leadership reforms that emphasize fairness, recognition, and empowerment are critical to reversing this decline.

Table 6: Morale and Well-Being

Table 6

Morale and Well-Being

Indicator	M	SD	Interpretation
Emotional exhaustion from heavy workload	2.95	0.86	Agree
Reduced motivation to perform well	3.01	0.90	Agree
Diminished confidence in management	2.91	0.88	Agree
Feeling less valued by department	2.37	0.59	Agree
Overall Mean	2.85	0.87	Agree

As shown in Table 6, workload overload negatively impacts morale and well-being ($M = 2.85$*). Emotional exhaustion ($M = 2.95$*) and loss of motivation ($M = 3.01$*) were the most notable consequences.

These findings affirm the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory, where chronic depletion of physical and emotional resources leads to fatigue and detachment. Research by Baum et al. (2022) and Moreno et al. (2024) corroborates this, linking sustained workload to burnout and reduced resilience. A structured wellness and resilience program within the PNP could mitigate these effects.

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Table 7: Perceived Organizational Efficiency

Table 7
Perceived Organizational Efficiency

Indicator	M	SD	Interpretation
Lack of task monitoring or oversight	3.12	0.81	Agree
Better workload management improves performance	3.10	0.82	Agree
Uneven workloads across units	3.03	0.82	Agree
Workload affects response efficiency	3.03	0.94	Agree
Overall Mean	3.00	0.87	Agree

Respondents agreed that workload imbalance hampers efficiency ($M = 3.00$*). The highest item—"Lack of monitoring or evaluation of task distribution" ($M = 3.12$*)—indicates supervisory gaps.

These results support Role Theory, which posits that role ambiguity and poor delineation of responsibilities cause inefficiency. Consistent with Anders et al. (2024), inadequate monitoring of task flow diminishes coordination and delays service delivery. Strategic realignment through regular audits and digital monitoring tools is recommended.

Table 8: Demographic and Strategic Factors

Table 8
Demographic and Strategic Factors Influencing Workload Experience

Indicator	M	SD	Interpretation
Higher stress among junior officers	2.89	0.90	Agree
Female officers experience more fatigue	2.91	0.92	Agree
Higher education mitigates stress	2.94	0.89	Agree
Shorter tenure linked to poorer performance	2.89	0.94	Agree
Overall Mean	2.86	0.91	Agree

As indicated in Table 8, demographic factors influence workload perceptions ($M = 2.86$*). Officers with higher education showed greater coping ability ($M = 2.94$*), while female and junior officers reported higher stress levels ($M = 2.89$–2.91*).

This supports the Person–Environment Fit (P–E Fit) Theory, which states that a mismatch between individual capacity and task complexity elevates stress. Findings mirror Baek, Han, & Seepersad (2021) and Anders et al. (2024), who observed similar disparities across rank and gender. Targeted wellness interventions and mentorship programs can improve adaptation and morale.

Table 9: Strategies to Lessen Workload and Improve Support

Table 9
Preferred Strategies for Reducing Workload Stress

Strategy	M	SD	Interpretation
Increasing manpower	3.19	0.82	Agree
Fair and consistent supervision	3.15	0.81	Agree
Flexible scheduling	3.09	0.87	Agree
Enhanced technology and automation	3.05	0.88	Agree
Overall Mean	3.07	0.85	Agree

Respondents strongly supported institutional interventions ($M = 3.07$*). The most endorsed strategy was increasing manpower ($M = 3.19$*), followed by fair supervisory practices and flexible scheduling.

This consensus confirms JD-R and COR frameworks—expanding resources and supervisory support restores balance and resilience. Studies by Turner et al. (2022) and Otto & Gatens (2022) affirm that such reforms reduce stress and improve performance. Integrating technology, fair evaluation, and regular check-ins can thus strengthen both well-being and efficiency.

Across all domains, findings consistently validate the JD-R model: high demands paired with limited resources create cumulative stress that undermines morale, job satisfaction, and institutional productivity. The JDC, COR, ERI, and P–E Fit theories further elucidate how inadequate control, sustained resource loss, perceived inequity, and misalignment between ability and task demand perpetuate strain.

Organizational change—anchored in equitable workload distribution, supportive leadership, and structural modernization—is therefore imperative to ensure that Philippine law enforcement remains both effective and humane.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and theoretical synthesis, the following recommendations are proposed at three interrelated levels—organizational, managerial, and individual:

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1. Organizational Reforms

- Manpower Augmentation: The Philippine National Police should institutionalize regular manpower audits to determine staffing adequacy per jurisdiction. Additional personnel should be deployed based on workload metrics rather than population size alone.
- Workload Management Systems: Implement a digital workload monitoring platform to track task assignments, deadlines, and overtime hours. This allows equitable distribution of duties and transparency in performance assessment.
- Resource and Technological Support: Modernize administrative processes by introducing case management software, voice-to-text reporting tools, and automated documentation systems, which can reduce paperwork and cognitive strain.

2. Leadership and Managerial Interventions

- Supervisory Training: Police leaders should undergo structured leadership and stress management training, emphasizing fairness, emotional intelligence, and adaptive delegation. The JD-R framework underscores that supportive supervision mitigates the negative effects of high demands.
- Wellness Integration: Institutionalize a Wellness and Resilience Program that includes mental health check-ins, peer counseling, and periodic psychological first-aid sessions. Supervisors must be trained to identify early signs of burnout and refer affected personnel for intervention.
- Performance Evaluation Reform: Develop transparent, developmental, and supportive evaluation systems that emphasize efficiency, teamwork, and professional growth rather than punitive metrics. Recognition and reward mechanisms should reflect not only output but effort, innovation, and integrity.

3. Individual and Professional Development

- Capacity-Building and Continuing Education: Encourage officers to engage in continuing professional development (CPD), focusing on time management, emotional regulation, and adaptive coping strategies. This enhances P-E Fit and strengthens individual resilience.
- Gender-Sensitive Support Programs: Establish specialized initiatives to support female officers and those with caregiving responsibilities, ensuring inclusivity and equitable access to wellness and advancement opportunities.
- Peer Support Systems: Create peer mentoring networks to foster camaraderie and knowledge exchange between senior and junior officers, reinforcing collective efficacy and morale.

4. Policy and Research Recommendations

- National Policy on Workload Management: The PNP and the National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM) should adopt a standardized workload management policy, integrating measurable workload indicators into human resource planning and performance audits.
- Longitudinal Research: Future studies should employ mixed-method and longitudinal designs to examine causal relationships between workload, well-being, and performance over time. Including qualitative interviews may also capture nuanced experiences and cultural factors affecting stress and resilience.
- Comparative Analysis Across Regions: Expanding research to other provinces and units will establish a national baseline for workload-related well-being, enabling region-specific interventions and equitable policy formulation.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the impact of workload overload on the well-being, job performance, and organizational efficiency of police personnel in Pampanga, Philippines. Through a quantitative, cross-sectional design involving 385 officers, the study revealed that workload overload is a persistent and multifaceted problem affecting both individual welfare and institutional performance.

Findings showed that police officers frequently experience task saturation, extended working hours, and the necessity to perform non-core administrative duties. These conditions reflect both quantitative overload (too much work in limited time) and qualitative overload (tasks exceeding skill or resource capacity). The results substantiate the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model, which posits that high job demands coupled with insufficient organizational support produce strain, burnout, and diminished motivation.

Correlational analyses further revealed that workload overload reduces job satisfaction, weakens morale, and erodes perceptions of fairness and support within the organization. Officers with lower rank, shorter tenure, or lesser educational attainment reported higher stress and performance difficulties, aligning with the Person–Environment Fit (P-E Fit) Theory, which attributes stress to mismatches between capability and task demand. Similarly, female officers exhibited higher emotional fatigue, reflecting gendered differences in coping and emotional labor.

At the institutional level, inefficient workload distribution, weak monitoring mechanisms, and limited technological support were perceived to undermine organizational efficiency. These findings affirm the Effort–Reward Imbalance (ERI) Theory and Role Theory, both emphasizing that inequitable effort–reward systems and role ambiguity diminish productivity and morale.

Overall, the study demonstrates that workload overload in the PNP is not merely an issue of individual capacity but of structural and managerial design. Without deliberate reform, the cycle of overextension, fatigue, and inefficiency will persist, jeopardizing both officer welfare and public service delivery.

The implications extend beyond Pampanga: addressing workload imbalance is essential to sustaining an effective, ethical, and community-responsive police force nationwide. Enhancing well-being and performance among officers is therefore both an organizational necessity and a moral imperative for public safety governance.

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