RESEARCH ARTICLE

PHILIPPINE COAST GUARD RESCUERS: STORIES FROM THE FRONTLINE

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ABSTRACT

The Philippine Coast Guard Rescuer stand as indispensable stewards of both land and water, undertaking vital roles as the safe-guarders of marine resources, the environment, and the lives and property adrift at sea. Their unwavering commitment extends to the enforcement of maritime laws within Philippine jurisdiction, exemplifying a multifaceted dedication to the protection and well-being of the maritime domain. In the relentless pursuit of their duties, they navigate a dynamic spectrum of activities and challenges that form the crucible of their experiences. In the face of harsh weather and formidable situations, these guardians of the coast willingly expose themselves to personal risks, responding to distress calls with a singular focus on saving lives. Their encounters with difficult circumstances serve as a testament to their resilience and fortitude, highlighting the profound impact of their service on both the individuals they aid and the broader maritime environment. Beyond the immediate challenges, the personnel reap the intrinsic benefits of providing steadfast support to those in need, a reward that resonates throughout their lifelong commitment. The training, expertise, and unyielding commitment of the Philippine Coast Guard Personnel empower them to surmount challenges and fulfill their responsibilities as guardians of the nation's coast. A comprehensive study delving into the lived experiences of ten participants from the Philippine Coast Guard Rescuers sheds light on the intricate facets of their service. In the course of the study, three (3) research problems were answered; namely: (1) What are the positive experiences of the informants?, (2) What are the negative experiences of the informants? and (3) What are the aspirations of the informants? Conducted through face-to-face interviews, the study identified nine emergent themes based on infomant's responses: Postive Experiences: (1) Professional Growth and Skill Enhancement, (2) Supportive Team Dynamics and Camaraderie, and (3) Impactful Community Engagement. Negative Experiences of the Informants: (4) Occupational Stress and Burnout, (5) Insufficient Resources and Equipment Challenges, and (6) Emotional Toll of Critical Incidents. Aspirations of the Informants: (7) Advancement in Specialized Training and Expertise, (8) Community Outreach and Education Initiatives, and (9) Leadership and Mentorship Roles. Based on the findings of the study, the following measures for implementation were offered: First, The study underscores the importance of continuous training and skill enhancement for Coast Guard rescuers. Implementing specialized training programs, incorporating the latest rescue techniques, and providing regular skill development opportunities can contribute to the professional growth and effectiveness of rescue personnel. This implication suggests that investing in ongoing training initiatives will better equip rescuers to handle diverse challenges, ultimately improving their overall performance and the success of rescue missions. Second, The study highlights the challenges faced by Coast Guard rescuers due to insufficient resources and equipment limitations. Organizations responsible for maritime safety, including the Philippine Coast Guard, may consider this finding as a call to action for resource allocation and infrastructure improvement. Adequate funding for modern vessels, cutting-edge rescue equipment, and upgraded communication systems can significantly enhance the efficiency and success rates of rescue operations. This implication emphasizes the need for strategic planning to address resource gaps and ensure the optimal functioning of Coast Guard units. Third, The study sheds light on the emotional toll experienced by Coast Guard rescuers, emphasizing the need for mental health support and occupational well-being initiatives. Organizations can implement counseling services, debriefing sessions, and mental health awareness programs to assist rescuers in coping with the emotional challenges of their roles. This implication underscores the importance of prioritizing the mental health of rescue personnel, acknowledging the demanding nature of their work and providing the necessary support systems to promote resilience and well-being. The continuous and diligent performance of their responsibilities is evident in their unwavering efforts to ensure the safety of community travelers and the preservation of marine life. In essence, the personnel of the Philippine Coast Guard stand as paragons of diligence, safeguarding the seas and ensuring the safety of citizens in their maritime voyages.

INTRODUCTION

In the realm of maritime safety and emergency response, the Philippine Coast Guard's rescue personnel stand as the frontline guardians of our nation's waters. Their experiences, often obscured by the vastness of the seas they navigate and the challenges they confront, form a compelling narrative that deserves exploration. In delving into the riveting world of the Philippine Coast Guard's rescue personnel, this research aims to unravel the multifaceted tapestry of their experiences on the frontline. These unsung heroes operate in the dynamic interplay of land and sea, facing unique challenges and triumphs as they navigate treacherous waters and respond to emergencies with unwavering dedication. Throughout this exploration, we seek to shed light on the daily encounters, the emotional rollercoaster, and the professional growth that characterize the lives of these remarkable individuals. From perilous rescue missions to the camaraderie forged in the face of adversity, the study endeavors to capture the essence of the Philippine Coast Guard rescuers' stories. Through their narratives, we gain insights into the complexities of their roles, the resilience required, and the impact of their service on both the personnel and the communities they serve. As we embark on this journey, the intention is not only to amplify the voices of these brave men and women but also to foster a deeper understanding of the indispensable role they play in safeguarding lives and promoting maritime safety. Their experiences stand as a testament to the unwavering commitment of the Philippine Coast Guard's rescue personnel, providing a valuable resource for both appreciation and comprehension of their vital contributions to the nation's security and well-being. The Philippine Coast Guard has demonstrated its commitment to duty by working to safeguard the nation's marine resources and uphold maritime laws and regulations. Several interdictions and seizures of boats involved in smuggling, illicit fishing, and other maritime crimes have been carried out by Philippine Coast Guard troops (Kim et al., 2018). Overall, the professionalism and commitment of the Philippine Coast Guard's staff, who are devoted to serving the nation and guaranteeing the safety and security of its seas and coastal towns, is demonstrated by the organization's devotion to duty (Frittelli et al., 2019). Like any organization, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) faces challenges and problems that need to be addressed. The Philippine Coast Guard is often faced with limited resources, including budget constraints and insufficient manpower. This can make it difficult for the agency to carry out its various responsibilities effectively. Philippine Coast Guard's equipment and assets are aging and may require maintenance or replacement. This can affect the agency's ability to respond to emergencies and carry out its various functions (Sutinen, 2018; Yahaya and Hirunruk, 2018).

The study is anchored on the David McClelland Acquired Needs Theory, 1961and supported by Sirota's three factor theory and Weiner Attribution Theory, 1974. The sheds light on the intricate interplay between an individual's specific needs and their impact on behavior, motivation, and effectiveness in various professional contexts. McClelland posits that these needs are not innate but are acquired and shaped by an individual's life experiences over time. Central to this theory are three primary needs: achievement, affiliation, and power. The need for achievement (nAch) is a fundamental aspect of the Acquired Needs Theory. Individuals with a high need for achievement are characterized by their intrinsic desire to excel, surpass challenges, and attain success. McClelland observed that achievers are driven by the pursuit of meaningful accomplishments and tend to avoid both low-risk and high-risk situations. Low-risk situations are eschewed because the easily attained success is perceived as lacking genuine achievement. On the other hand, high-risk situations are also avoided, as achievers often attribute the outcome to chance rather than their own efforts. Achievers exhibit a preference for tasks with a moderate probability of success, ideally around a 50% chance, reflecting their inclination towards challenging yet attainable goals. Achievers thrive on regular feedback to monitor the progress of their achievements. The need for accomplishment is deeply ingrained in their professional psyche, and they often choose to work either independently or with fellow high

achievers. The preference for a moderate probability of success and the avoidance of extremes in risk-taking underscore the nuanced nature of the achievement-oriented individual's approach to tasks and challenges. Conversely, the need for affiliation (nAff) represents another facet of the Acquired Needs Theory. Individuals with a high need for affiliation seek harmonious relationships with others and a sense of acceptance within their social and work environments. These individuals tend to conform to the norms and expectations of their work groups, prioritizing interpersonal connections and cooperative efforts. High-affiliation individuals thrive in work settings that offer significant opportunities for personal interaction, emphasizing the importance of social relationships and collaboration in their professional fulfillment. The third component of the Acquired Needs Theory is the need for power (nPow), which can manifest in two distinct forms: personal power and institutional power. Those driven by a need for personal power aspire to direct and influence others, a characteristic that is sometimes perceived as undesirable. In contrast, individuals with a need for institutional power, also known as social power, seek to organize and coordinate the efforts of others to advance the goals of the organization. The dichotomy between personal and institutional power highlights the varied motivations that drive individuals with a high need for power, showcasing their potential impact on leadership styles and organizational dynamics. The present study draws theoretical foundations from the Acquired Needs Theory (McClelland, 1961), which posits that an individual's specific needs are acquired and shaped by life experiences over time. These needs, classified as achievement, affiliation, and power, play a crucial role in influencing an individual's motivation and effectiveness in various professional settings.

McClelland's seminal work, "The Achieving Society" (1961), provides a comprehensive exploration of the need for achievement (nAch). According to McClelland, individuals with a high need for achievement are driven by an intrinsic desire to excel and tend to avoid both low-risk and high-risk situations. The work emphasizes the achiever's preference for tasks with a moderate probability of success, their aversion to easily attained success, and their propensity for regular feedback to monitor progress. Moreover, the need for affiliation (nAff) and the need for power (nPow) are integral components of the Acquired Needs Theory. High-affiliation individuals seek harmonious relationships and acceptance within social and work environments (McClelland, 1961). This aspect is further supported by research such as Jones and Davis (1965), who explored the importance of interpersonal relationships in organizational settings. McClelland's exploration of the need for power distinguishes between personal and institutional power, a concept expounded upon in subsequent literature. For instance, Winter (1973) delves into the dynamics of personal and institutional power and their implications for leadership styles within organizations. McClelland's seminal work, "The Achieving Society" (1961), forms the bedrock of our understanding of the need for achievement (nAch). His research delineates that individuals with a high need for achievement are driven by an intrinsic desire to excel and often prefer tasks with a moderate probability of success. Jones and Davis (1965) further contribute to this understanding by emphasizing the importance of interpersonal relationships in organizational settings, laying the groundwork for the affiliation component of McClelland's theory. The study was further supported by Sirota's Three-Factor Theory, which introduces a contemporary perspective on motivational factors in the workplace. Sirota (2005) suggests that individuals are motivated by a sense of fairness in their treatment, aligning with McClelland's emphasis on feedback as an essential component for individuals with a high need for achievement. The equity/fairness factor in Sirota's model underscores the importance of perceived fairness in the workplace, influencing motivation and job satisfaction. Moreover, Sirota's achievement factor aligns closely with McClelland's need for achievement. The desire for achievement, as a motivating factor, remains a consistent theme across these theories, emphasizing its universal significance in understanding individual behavior and performance in professional settings. Camaraderie, the third factor in Sirota's model, resonates with McClelland's emphasis on the need for affiliation. Positive social

interactions and a sense of camaraderie are vital elements in fostering a supportive work environment, aligning with the interpersonal dynamics explored by McClelland. This alignment highlights the interconnectedness of these theories, emphasizing the holistic nature of motivation and the intricate interplay of multiple factors in shaping individual experiences. Weiner Attribution Theory, 1974 formulated by psychologist Bernard Weiner in 1974, constitutes a significant framework in understanding how individuals attribute causes to their own and others' successes and failures, subsequently influencing emotions and behaviors. This theory delves into the cognitive processes that individuals undergo when interpreting the reasons behind various outcomes. Three key attribution dimensions form the foundation of Weiner's theory: Locus of Control, Stability, and Controllability. The Locus of Control dimension involves attributions to either internal or external factors. Internal attributions relate to factors within an individual's control, such as effort or ability, while external attributions pertain to factors beyond one's control, like luck or task difficulty. Stability refers to the perceived permanence of causes. Stable attributions suggest enduring factors, whereas unstable attributions indicate temporary influences. Controllability revolves around whether the causes are within an individual's control. Controllable attributions imply personal agency, while uncontrollable attributions suggest factors beyond one's influence. Attributional patterns, or styles, emerge as individuals develop habitual ways of explaining events. These patterns influence expectations, emotions, and behaviors. For instance, an optimistic attributional style, characterized by attributing success to internal, stable, and controllable factors, can lead to positive emotional responses and a willingness to tackle similar tasks in the future. Conversely, a pessimistic style, attributing failure to external, unstable, and uncontrollable factors, may result in negative emotions and reduced motivation for future attempts. Weiner's Attribution Theory extends beyond individual psychology and finds applications in educational and organizational contexts. In education, understanding students' attributions provides educators with insights to tailor feedback and support. For instance, praising effort for success reinforces an internal and controllable attribution, fostering a growth mindset. In organizations, attributions can influence job satisfaction, motivation, and performance. Recognizing and addressing employees' attributions for success and failure can inform leadership strategies, enhance motivation, and contribute to a positive organizational culture.

This study tackles about The Lived Experiences of Emergency Department Personnel in Working with Individuals with Mental Health Needs by Sarah Wohlford- Neubauer, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the current study of the experiences of emergency personnel in treating individuals with mental illnesses and their perspectives of mental health emergencies. This chapter is organized in the following manner: the significance of the study is presented along with the study's research questions and sub questions. The study's conceptual framework and the researcher's theoretical sensitivity will be addressed along with the parameters of the study. Individuals who work in emergency services and departments are faced with acute situations and overwhelming patient loads. In addition to intervening in physical health emergencies, emergency personnel treat and stabilize individuals with psychiatric emergencies and symptoms. Researchers estimate that out of the 95 million visits to emergency departments approximately 12 million instances were related to mental health and/or substance use issues (Minassian, Vike, & Wilson, 2013; Owens et al., 2010). These emergencies include suicidal ideations, suicide attempts, acute exacerbation of a psychotic episode, and experiences of trauma (Bullard, Unger, Spence, & Grafstein, 2008). At times psychiatric illnesses and their subsequent symptoms can be life threatening and necessitate immediate attention and stabilization. Stabilization includes assessment, immediate management, referrals to inpatient psychiatric treatment centers, and crisis intervention (Hillard, 1994). The experiences of emergency department workers have not been thoroughly captured by research endeavors (Potter, 2006; Wilstrand, Lindgren, Gilje, & Olofsson, 2007). Emergency department personnel may have had some training in treating individuals with mental health issues, but research indicates that many medical practitioners do not believe that they are adequately trained (Jelinek, Weiland, Mackinaly, Gerdtz, & Hill, 2013; Kerrison & Chapman, 2007; McDonough et al., 2003). The combination of the obligations and roles of emergency department personnel, lack of adequate training and education, and high volumes of clients may contribute to ineffective treatments of individuals with psychiatric conditions (Brunero, Jeon, & Foster, 2012). In addition to emergency department workers, emergency medical services (EMS) personnel encounter individuals in psychiatric crises frequently. In the United States, EMS workers treat approximately 22 million patients per year (Maguire & Walz, 2004). EMS crews usually include firefighters, paramedics, police officers, and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2008). In response to the increase of mental health related calls, EMS teams developed crisis intervention teams (CIT). CIT establish intelligent and safe approaches to situations that involve individuals with mental health conditions (Dupont & Cochran, 2000; Steadman, Dean, Borum, & Morrissey, 2000; Watson & Fulambarker, 2012). Researchers suggest that CIT implementation may result in increases in treatment referrals (Teller, Munetz, Gil, & Ritter, 2006) and reduction in stereotyping and stigmatization of individuals with mental health conditions (Hanafi, Bahora, Demir, & Compton, 2008).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The qualitative research method was applied in this study. The project was carried out using a phenomenological methodology. Following Moustakas transcendental phenomenology, it is a method for analyzing study respondent's data to identify important themes (Moustakas, et al., 1994). A philosophy of experience is phenomenology. The lived experience of humans is the ultimate source of all meaning and value for phenomenology. All philosophical frameworks, scientific hypotheses, and artistic evaluations are abstractions from the ebb and flow of the experienced world. This research design is suited to explore the lived experiences of the Philippine Coast Guard rescuers in performing their functions.
The research site for this study was in Danao Sub Station Coast Guard in Danao City, Cebu. This particular location was selected to capture the unique context and experiences of the rescue personnel operating within this specific Coast Guard station. To ensure transparency and ethical considerations, a transmittal letter was presented to the Danao Sub Station Coast Guard, notifying the rescue personnel about the impending research. This letter serves as a formal communication tool, explaining the purpose, scope, and significance of the study. Moreover, it seeks collaboration and consent from the personnel, fostering a cooperative and informed approach to the research endeavor.

The researcher carefully selected a highly experienced Rescue Personnel from the Danao Sub Station Coast Guard, each boasting an impressive track record of five years in their profession, ensuring a high level of expertise and qualification as an informant of the study. Their were 10 informants and researcher assigned (4) four for the (IDI) In-depth interview and (6) six for the focus group discussion.
This study utilized an interview guide with structured questions to stimulate discussion with the study participants carefully.The researcher constructed the interview guide questions in a manner that will utilized both in depth interviews and focus group discussion which were composed of three (3) research questions. The interview guide will be submitted first to the panelists for content validation and approval prior to the actual conduct of interviews. The data gathered was collated using Colaizzi's, 1978 approach. Colaizzi's method is the process used to aid in extracting, organizing, and analyzing such narrative datasets. Also, descriptive phenomenology is concerned with revealing the "essence" or "essential structure" of any phenomenon under investigation – that is, those features that make it what it is, rather than something else (Morrow, Rodriguez, and King, 2015). Studies exploring the experiences of the participants can also be considered a sensitive issue. The researcher must consider the oral damages that might happen during the conduct of the study. So, the researcher must make sure that the pieces of information gathered from the participants must remain confidential.

The researcher must also assure the anonymity of the subject for the protection and security of the course of the participants. As to the issue of trustworthiness and credibility which is much needed in this phenomenological research, the researcher will make sure that all information gathered from the informants is recorded and transcribed in accordance with the standard ruling. The confidentiality of the information gathered must be considered private and should be remained between the students of University of Cebu Lapu-Lapu and Mandaue and to the participant. The privacy of the gathered data is the main ethical consideration of the study. The rights of participants was indicated on its consented form to comfort with the process and questioned asked. The participant's information were kept classified so that they may continue to participate the said interview. Trustworthiness. As to the issue of trustworthiness and credibility which is much needed in this phenomenological research, the researcher will make sure that all information gathered from the informants is recorded and transcribed in accordance with the standard ruling. Trustworthiness and credibility can be accomplished by utilizing and transcribing the raw data coming from the audio record in the focus group discussions and in – depth interview. The said data consist of personal interviews, interviews transcript, member checking and follow-up personal interviews of the informant.

To maintain credibility of the research findings, the researcher see to it that all the data or information that will be gathered will be of known to the informants in manner that their signature will appear on the transcription made so that a confirmation will be made if the data is true or not. If there will be clarifications in the answers provided by the informant in the transcribed information, there will be a follow-up questions that will be asked. The initial stage of the interview is more on proper orientation with the informants which includes knowing each other and explaining the purpose or objectives as well as the process of the study. To promote transferability, the researcher done a thorough job of describing the research context and the assumptions that are essential to the research. Although, transferability is not considered as a viable naturalistic research objective, the context in which qualitative data collection occurs defines the data and contributes to the interpretation of the data gathered in the study. To ensure dependability, the researcher utilized focus group discussion and in-depth interview process. In other words, if a person want to replicate your study, they should have enough information from your research report to do so and obtain similar findings as your study did. A qualitative researcher can use inquiry audit in order to establish dependability, which requires an outside person and the data analysis in order to ensure that the findings are consistent and could be repeated.

Finally, to ensure conformability, the researcher agreed on the statement of Guba (1981) that conformability is the degree of neutrality in the research findings. In other words, this means that the findings are based on participant's responses and not any potential bias or personal motivations of the researcher. This involves making sure that the researcher bias will not skew the interpretation of what the research participants said to fit a certain narrative. To establish conformability, qualitative researcher will provide an audit trail, which highlights every step of data analysis that will made in order to provide a rationale for the decisions made. This helps establish that the research findings accurately portray participant's responses. As to the coding for the audit trail, the researcher see to it that there is said to be checking of the original transcript. The researcher categorized every themes coming from their narration and stories for an easy and accurate access to the information.

RESULTS

The data that are presented were divided into (3) three parts: (3) Postive Experiences of the informants (2) Negative experiences of the Informants, and (3) Aspirations of the Informants. In this distinctive study, the researcher meticulously collected comprehensive data from the informants by employing a combination of In-depth Interviews and Focus Group Discussions. With a commitment to constructing a nuanced depiction of the informants'

experiences, the gathered information underwent a thorough process of transcription, careful reading, and in-depth analysis. The responses of the informants were scrutinized to extract significant statements and discern formulated meanings. Through a rigorous analytical approach, cluster themes began to emerge, and this iterative process continued until a total of nine (9) emergent themes unfolded, encapsulating the rich and multifaceted dimensions of the participants' experiences. These nine (9) emerging themes are considered as answers to the sub-problems of this study. The following are:

Experiences of the Informants

Positive Experiences

- Professional Growth and Skill Enhancement
- Supportive Team Dynamics and Camaraderie
- Impactful Community Engagement

Negative Experiences of the Informants

- Occupational Stress and Burnout
- Insufficient Resources and Equipment Challenges
- Emotional Toll of Critical Incidents

Aspirations of the Informants

- Advancement in Specialized Training and Expertise
- Community Outreach and Education Initiatives
- Leadership and Mentorship Roles

Positive Experiences: Amidst the vast seas and challenging maritime landscapes of the Philippines, the Philippine Coast Guard rescuers emerge as beacons of positivity, embodying a narrative woven with themes of valor, resilience, and dedicated service. These unsung heroes, committed to safeguarding lives and ensuring maritime safety, carry with them a tapestry of uplifting experiences that illuminate the positive facets of their demanding profession.

Professional Growth and Skill Enhancement: Numerous Coast Guard rescuers have articulated a transformative journey marked by skill acquisition, recounting instances where they embraced new and advanced capabilities. From mastering cutting-edge rescue techniques to honing navigational skills, these professionals describe a continuous commitment to acquiring competencies that enhance their effectiveness in safeguarding maritime environments. Many informants expressed a positive shift in their professional trajectories, detailing experiences of skill enhancement, career growth, and increased competence. Through immersive narratives, participants shared instances of acquiring new skills, taking on challenging roles, and receiving valuable training opportunities, all contributing to a palpable sense of accomplishment and professional fulfillment.

Supportive Team Dynamics and Camaraderie: Informants in the Coast Guard Rescuers consistently share stories of mutual encouragement within their teams, illustrating how a supportive atmosphere acts as a pillar of resilience during challenging missions. Whether navigating treacherous waters or executing complex rescue operations, the ethos of encouragement propels the team forward, instilling confidence and fortitude among its members. A recurring theme emerged around the positive experiences related to the informants' team dynamics. Informants highlighted a supportive and collaborative work environment, where teamwork and camaraderie played pivotal roles in fostering a sense of belonging. Shared stories illuminated instances of mutual encouragement, effective communication, and the collective triumphs that solidified a strong sense of unity among team members.

Impactful Community Engagement: Informants frequently express enthusiasm for community outreach programs initiated by the Philippine Coast Guard. These programs extend beyond immediate rescue operations, encompassing initiatives that promote safety awareness, disaster preparedness, and maritime education. The

rescuers take pride in being active contributors to these outreach efforts, fostering a sense of community resilience and preparedness. Frequently express enthusiasm for community outreach programs initiated by the Philippine Coast Guard. These programs extend beyond immediate rescue operations, encompassing initiatives that promote safety awareness, disaster preparedness, and maritime education. The rescuers take pride in being active contributors to these outreach efforts, fostering a sense of community resilience and preparedness. Informants widely shared positive experiences related to their community engagements. Narratives showcased instances of making a positive impact on the community, ranging from successful rescue missions to community outreach programs. The informants expressed a deep sense of satisfaction and pride in contributing to the welfare of the community, creating a resonant theme of meaningful and fulfilling service beyond the scope of their immediate duties.

Negative Experiences: In the arduous landscape of maritime rescue and disaster response, the narratives of the Philippine Coast Guard rescuers also bear the weight of challenges and adversities.

Occupational Stress and Burnout: A prevalent negative theme centers around occupational stress and burnout experienced by the informants. Many participants shared stories of the demanding nature of their roles, long working hours, and exposure to traumatic incidents. This theme sheds light on the emotional toll that their profession can take, emphasizing the need for support systems and strategies to address occupational stress. Numerous Coast Guard rescuers have candidly shared experiences that underscore the demanding nature of their roles, describing the inherent challenges that come with ensuring maritime safety. Long working hours, unpredictable emergency calls, and the perpetual need for readiness contribute to the strain on their physical and mental well-being, highlighting the toll that such a demanding profession can take.

Insufficient Resources and Equipment Challenges: Informants detailed negative experiences related to the inadequacy of resources and challenges associated with equipment. Participants expressed frustration over the scarcity of essential tools and technology required for efficient and effective operations. This theme underscores the critical need for resource allocation and the impact that inadequate infrastructure can have on the overall effectiveness of their roles. Coast Guard rescuers consistently recount frustrating experiences stemming from the inadequacy of resources. Many participants express the challenges they face due to a scarcity of essential tools required for their operations. This frustration underscores the tangible impact that insufficient resources can have on their ability to execute their duties efficiently and respond effectively to maritime emergencies. Participants consistently stress the impact of inadequate infrastructure on the overall effectiveness of their roles. Whether it's insufficient vessels, outdated rescue equipment, or limitations in communication systems, the negative theme of resource inadequacy illuminates the hurdles faced by Coast Guard rescuers in maintaining optimal operational standards. This underscores the critical importance of resource allocation to ensure their capacity to fulfill their crucial mission.

Emotional Toll of Critical Incidents: The emotional toll of responding to critical incidents emerged as a poignant negative theme. Informants shared experiences of dealing with traumatic events and their aftermath, grappling with emotions such as grief and helplessness. This theme highlights the need for mental health support and debriefing mechanisms to address the emotional challenges inherent in their line of work. Coast Guard rescuers candidly recount the emotional toll of responding to critical incidents, sharing vivid accounts of grappling with intense emotions such as grief and helplessness. The weight of witnessing distressing scenes and the challenges associated with providing assistance in dire situations contribute to a profound emotional impact, underscoring the depth of their commitment and the personal sacrifices made in the line of duty. Informants consistently communicate the challenges they face in coping with the aftermath of traumatic events. Whether it's a maritime accident, a challenging rescue mission, or witnessing the human impact of natural disasters, the emotional burden weighs heavily on the rescuers. This negative theme emphasizes the need for strategies to help them navigate the emotional complexities inherent in their roles.

Aspirations of the Informants: These themes highlight the informants' forward-looking perspectives, showcasing a collective commitment to personal and professional growth, community engagement, and leadership within their respective fields. Understanding these aspirations is crucial for designing programs and opportunities that align with the long-term goals and visions of the personnel.

Advancement in Specialized Training and Expertise: A prominent theme revolves around the informants' aspirations for continuous professional development. Many participants expressed a strong desire to advance their specialized training and expertise. Whether through advanced certifications, specialized courses, or exposure to cutting-edge techniques, the informants conveyed a keen interest in staying at the forefront of their field, ensuring they are well-equipped to handle diverse challenges.

Community Outreach and Education Initiatives: Informants shared aspirations related to community outreach and education. Many expressed a deep commitment to fostering community resilience and safety through proactive initiatives. Aspiring to go beyond immediate response duties, participants conveyed a desire to engage in educational programs, workshops, and community partnerships to enhance public awareness and preparedness, reflecting a broader vision of their role within the community.

Leadership and Mentorship Roles: Another recurring theme centers on the informants' aspirations for leadership and mentorship roles. Several participants expressed a desire to take on leadership positions within their organizations or to become mentors for newer members of the team. This theme underscores a commitment to not only personal growth but also a willingness to contribute to the development of their colleagues, fostering a sense of continuity and leadership within their professional community.

DISCUSSION

The study is anchored on the David McClelland Acquired Needs Theory, 1961and supported by Sirota's three factor theory and Weiner Attribution Theory, 1974.

Postive Experiences: Professional Growth and Skill Enhancement - McClelland's theory posits that individuals are motivated by three basic needs: achievement, affiliation, and power. In the context of Coast Guard rescuers' experiences: Achievement: The desire for achievement is evident in the narratives as rescuers share instances of mastering cutting-edge rescue techniques and honing navigational skills. The continuous commitment to acquiring competencies reflects a need for personal accomplishment, a drive to excel in their roles, and a sense of pride derived from overcoming challenges. Affiliation: The narratives also touch upon the sense of camaraderie and mutual support within the rescue teams. The positive team dynamics contribute to a supportive work environment, fulfilling the need for affiliation. The collaborative nature of their work enhances the sense of belonging, fostering strong interpersonal relationships among team members. Power: While power might not be the primary motivator in a service-oriented profession like the Coast Guard, there is an element of power in the ability to effectively respond to emergencies and make a positive impact on the community. The acquisition of skills and competencies empowers rescuers to take on challenging roles and responsibilities, contributing to a heightened sense of efficacy. Smith et al. (2018) investigated the impact of specialized training programs on emergency responders' professional growth. The study found a significant positive correlation between participation in advanced training modules and increased self-efficacy, highlighting the instrumental role of skill enhancement programs in fostering professional development among responders.

The experiences of Philippine Coast Guard rescuers, as narrated in their stories of Professional Growth and Skill Enhancement, align with psychological theories that emphasize the importance of achievement, affiliation, equity, and attributions in shaping job satisfaction and well-being. In their examination of the psychological well-being of first responders, Johnson and Brown (2019) identified skill acquisition as a key factor influencing job satisfaction and resilience. The study emphasized the importance of continuous professional growth in mitigating the negative psychological impacts associated with the demanding nature of emergency response roles. A comprehensive analysis by Garcia and Perez (2020) explored the role of organizational support in facilitating the professional growth of emergency services personnel. The findings underscored the significance of a supportive work environment, access to training opportunities, and recognition for skill development in promoting the overall effectiveness and satisfaction of emergency responders. Supportive Team Dynamics and Camaraderie - The positive team dynamics can be attributed internally to the efforts and collaboration of team members. Weiner's theory suggests that internal attributions lead to positive emotions. In the context of Coast Guard rescuers, the sense of unity and mutual encouragement results from their collective efforts, reinforcing a positive internal attribution and contributing to a resilient and cohesive team (Weiner 1974). A study by Martinez and Lopez (2019) delved into the impact of teamwork on job satisfaction among emergency responders. The results highlighted the significance of camaraderie and collaborative work environments in fostering a sense of belonging. Team members who experienced mutual encouragement and shared triumphs reported higher levels of job satisfaction, emphasizing the intrinsic link between team dynamics and overall job contentment. Impactful Community Engagement - Weiner's theory suggests that individuals attribute success or failure either internally or externally. In the case of the Coast Guard rescuers' community engagement, internal attributions may involve recognizing the impact of their proactive contributions to community welfare. The positive experiences shared in narratives align with an internal attribution of success, reinforcing a sense of control and personal agency. On the other hand, external attributions may involve acknowledging the community's positive response to the outreach programs. The shared narratives highlight instances of making a positive impact on the community, emphasizing the external attribution of success to the collective efforts of the rescuers and the community. This recognition further contributes to their satisfaction and pride in community engagement.

Negative Experiences: Occupational Stress and Burnout - Occupational stress can be linked to the equity factor in Sirota's theory. Long working hours and the demanding nature of the roles may create perceptions of inequity if not balanced with adequate support and resources. Recognizing and addressing issues of fairness and workload distribution are essential to mitigate stress and prevent burnout among Coast Guard rescuers. the work of Smith and Brown (2017) has emphasized the importance of addressing fairness and workload distribution to prevent burnout among emergency responders. The synthesis of these studies supports the assertion that a comprehensive understanding of occupational stress among Coast Guard rescuers requires consideration of the equity dynamics outlined in Sirota's theory. This study builds upon and extends the existing literature by investigating practical strategies for recognizing, addressing, and mitigating stressors associated with inequity in the unique context of Coast Guard rescue operations. Insufficient Resources and Equipment Challenges - This theme anchored on the Conservation of Resources Theory asserts that individuals use various resources for completing work tasks such as time, cognitive attention, physical energy, but they have to replenish those resources during breaks in order to avoid stress (Kim, Park, &Niu, 2017). COR theory is a motivational theory that rests firstly on the basic tenet that individuals strive to obtain, retain, foster, and protect resources. According to COR theory, stress occurs under three conditions: 1) When individuals' key resources are threatened with loss, 2) When resources are lost, or 3) When individuals fail to gain resources following significant resource investment. Burnout is one such stress outcome and typically follows from a process of slow bleed out of

resources without counterbalancing resource gain or replenishment. Sirota's theory identifies equity as a factor influencing employee satisfaction. The challenges arising from insufficient resources can be attributed to issues of equity in resource allocation. Coast Guard rescuers, facing limitations in essential tools and technology, may perceive an imbalance in the distribution of resources. Addressing these disparities is essential for promoting a sense of fairness and equity within the organization. Emotional Toll of Critical Incidents - McClelland Acquired Needs Theory (1961) framework provides insights into how the need for achievement may drive Coast Guard rescuers to confront and grapple with the emotional challenges posed by critical incidents. The pursuit of successful outcomes in their rescue missions may amplify the emotional impact of witnessing distressing scenes, while the need for affiliation may underscore the profound commitment to the well-being of those they rescue. Additionally, the need for power may manifest in their perseverance in the face of emotional adversity, as rescuers strive to exert control over challenging situations. Complementing the study's foundation, Weiner's Attribution Theory (1974) adds depth to the exploration of rescuers' emotional responses. The theory posits that individuals attribute causality to events, affecting their emotional reactions. Applying Weiner's framework, the study seeks to understand how rescuers attribute the emotional toll of critical incidents, exploring implications for coping mechanisms. By investigating the attributions made by rescuers regarding their emotional experiences, the study aims to identify avenues for targeted interventions and support. As the study unfolds, the integration of these theories informs the development of comprehensive support strategies tailored to the unique psychological dynamics of Coast Guard rescuers. By considering the motivational underpinnings outlined in McClelland's theory, the equity principles from Sirota's framework, and the attributional processes proposed by Weiner, the study aims to contribute to the design of resilience-building programs that address the emotional complexities inherent in the heroic efforts of Coast Guard rescuers.

Aspirations of the Informants: Advancement in Specialized Training and Expertise - The study, focusing on the theme of Advancement in Specialized Training and Expertise among Coast Guard rescuers, is anchored in the transformative leadership theory proposed by Bernard M. Bass in 1999. This theory emphasizes the importance of leaders' ability to inspire and elevate their followers, fostering a continuous pursuit of improvement and growth. The study aligns with Bass's principles by exploring how the informants, as potential leaders within their domain, aspire to elevate their capabilities through continuous professional development. The multifaceted strategies that informants employ in their pursuit of professional advancement. Whether through acquiring advanced certifications, participating in specialized courses, or seeking exposure to cutting-edge techniques, the informants are actively engaged in strategies that resonate with Bass's transformative leadership framework. These initiatives not only enhance individual competencies but also contribute to the overall effectiveness of Coast Guard rescue operations, Bass (1999). The identified theme within the study aligns seamlessly with this theory, as Coast Guard rescuers express a strong desire for ongoing learning and advancement. Their commitment to specialized training and expertise reflects a dedication to the transformative leadership principle of elevating oneself and, by extension, the entire team to new levels of proficiency and effectiveness. Community Outreach and Education Initiatives - The informants' desire to engage in community outreach and education initiatives reflects a broader vision of their role within the community. Beyond the immediate challenges of rescue operations, they see themselves as integral contributors to the well-being and safety of the communities they serve. This theme echoes the concept of community-oriented policing, emphasizing a proactive and collaborative approach to public safety. By actively participating in educational programs, rescuers aim to empower community members with knowledge and skills, fostering a resilient and prepared populace. In the context of community outreach, rescuers' aspirations can be viewed through the lens of these acquired needs. The desire to engage in educational programs and community partnerships may

stem from the need for achievement—wherein rescuers seek to make a lasting impact on community resilience. Simultaneously, the need for affiliation is evident as they express a commitment to fostering relationships with community members through proactive initiative McClelland (1961). Leadership and Mentorship Roles - The recurring theme of Leadership and Mentorship Roles sheds light on the informants' aspirations to not only advance personally but also contribute to the development of their colleagues. This theme aligns with leadership theories, such as transformational leadership, which emphasize the importance of leaders inspiring and developing their team members. The desire to take on leadership positions within their organizations and serve as mentors signifies a commitment to fostering a sense of continuity, leadership, and professional growth within the Coast Guard rescue community. Expressing a willingness to take on leadership and mentorship roles, the informants underscore their dedication to the growth and success of their professional community. By actively participating in the development of newer team members, they contribute to the creation of a supportive and dynamic work environment. This theme not only reflects individual aspirations but also implies a collective commitment to the longevity and excellence of the Coast Guard rescue community. Weiner's Attribution Theory (1974), offers insights into the leadership and mentorship aspirations expressed by Coast Guard rescuers. The theory highlights how individuals attribute causality to events and outcomes. In the context of leadership aspirations, rescuers may attribute their success to internal factors such as skills and dedication, fostering a sense of personal control. Aspiring to take on leadership positions and mentorship roles becomes a manifestation of the cognitive processes influenced by attribution theory, indicating a belief in their ability to positively influence and guide their colleagues.

CONCLUSION

The research titled "Philippine Coast Guard Rescuers: Stories from the Frontline" offers a profound exploration into the lived experiences of rescue personnel operating within the Philippine Coast Guard. The study is anchored on the David McClelland Acquired Needs Theory, 1961and supported by Sirota's three factor theory and Weiner Attribution Theory, 1974. By employing a qualitative phenomenological approach, this study aimed to unravel the multifaceted tapestry of their experiences, shedding light on both the positive and negative dimensions, as well as the aspirations that shape their professional journeys. The narratives of the Philippine Coast Guard rescuers illuminate a spectrum of positive experiences that serve as beacons of positivity amidst the challenges of their demanding profession. Three overarching themes emerged from their stories: Professional Growth and Skill Enhancement: The rescuers articulated a transformative journey marked by continuous skill acquisition and career growth. From mastering cutting-edge rescue techniques to honing navigational skills, they expressed a commitment to enhancing competencies, contributing to a palpable sense of accomplishment and professional fulfillment. Supportive Team Dynamics and Camaraderie: A prevailing theme revolved around mutual encouragement within their teams. The supportive atmosphere acted as a pillar of resilience during challenging missions, fostering a strong sense of belonging. Effective communication, camaraderie, and collective triumphs solidified unity among team members. Impactful Community Engagement: Rescuers expressed enthusiasm for community outreach programs that extended beyond immediate rescue operations. Initiatives promoting safety awareness, disaster preparedness, and maritime education showcased their active contributions to fostering community resilience and preparedness. Their positive impact ranged from successful rescue missions to community outreach programs, creating a resonant theme of meaningful service beyond immediate duties. The arduous landscape of maritime rescue and disaster response brings forth challenges and adversities that form a poignant narrative within the Philippine Coast Guard rescuers' experiences. Three predominant negative themes emerged: Occupational Stress and Burnout: A prevalent theme centered around the emotional toll of the demanding nature of their roles. Long working hours, exposure to traumatic incidents, and the perpetual need for readiness contributed to the strain on their physical

and mental well-being. This emphasized the need for support systems and strategies to address occupational stress. Insufficient Resources and Equipment Challenges: Rescuers detailed frustrations stemming from the inadequacy of resources and challenges associated with equipment. Scarcity of essential tools and technology hindered efficient and effective operations, highlighting the critical need for resource allocation to ensure optimal operational standards. Emotional Toll of Critical Incidents: The emotional toll of responding to critical incidents emerged as a poignant negative theme. Dealing with traumatic events and their aftermath, including grief and helplessness, underscored the need for mental health support and debriefing mechanisms to address the emotional challenges inherent in their line of work.

The study concludes with insights into the forward-looking perspectives and aspirations of the Philippine Coast Guard rescuers. Three recurring themes highlight their collective commitment to personal and professional growth: Advancement in Specialized Training and Expertise: Rescuers expressed a strong desire for continuous professional development, aspiring to advance their specialized training and expertise. This included pursuing advanced certifications, specialized courses, and exposure to cutting-edge techniques, ensuring they remain well-equipped to handle diverse challenges. Community Outreach and Education Initiatives: Informants shared aspirations related to community outreach and education. They expressed a deep commitment to fostering community resilience and safety through proactive initiatives, going beyond immediate response duties. Participants conveyed a desire to engage in educational programs, workshops, and community partnerships to enhance public awareness and preparedness, reflecting a broader vision of their role within the community. Leadership and Mentorship Roles: Another recurring theme centered on the informants' aspirations for leadership and mentorship roles. Several participants expressed a desire to take on leadership positions within their organizations or to become mentors for newer members of the team. This underscored a commitment not only to personal growth but also a willingness to contribute to the development of their colleagues, fostering a sense of continuity and leadership within their professional community. In conclusion, the stories from the frontline of the Philippine Coast Guard rescuers offer a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of their experiences, providing valuable insights for the enhancement of their well-being, operational effectiveness, and long-term development. The findings of this research contribute to the appreciation and comprehension of the vital contributions these unsung heroes make to the nation's security and well-being. Furthermore, the identified themes serve as a foundation for the design of programs and opportunities that align with the long-term goals and visions of the personnel, ensuring their continued success in safeguarding lives and promoting maritime safety.

Implications for Practices

First, The study underscores the importance of continuous training and skill enhancement for Coast Guard rescuers. Implementing specialized training programs, incorporating the latest rescue techniques, and providing regular skill development opportunities can contribute to the professional growth and effectiveness of rescue personnel. This implication suggests that investing in ongoing training initiatives will better equip rescuers to handle diverse challenges, ultimately improving their overall performance and the success of rescue missions. Second, The study highlights the challenges faced by Coast Guard rescuers due to insufficient resources and equipment limitations. Organizations responsible for maritime safety, including the Philippine Coast Guard, may consider this finding as a call to action for resource allocation and infrastructure improvement. Adequate funding for modern vessels, cutting-edge rescue equipment, and upgraded communication systems can significantly enhance the efficiency and success rates of rescue operations. This implication emphasizes the need for strategic planning to address resource gaps and ensure the optimal functioning of Coast Guard units. Third, The study sheds light on the emotional toll experienced by Coast Guard rescuers, emphasizing the need for mental health support and

occupational well-being initiatives. Organizations can implement counseling services, debriefing sessions, and mental health awareness programs to assist rescuers in coping with the emotional challenges of their roles. This implication underscores the importance of prioritizing the mental health of rescue personnel, acknowledging the demanding nature of their work and providing the necessary support systems to promote resilience and well-being.

Implication for Future Studies: First, Conducting longitudinal studies to track the long-term impact of rescue missions on the resilience and mental health of Coast Guard rescuers. Second, Exploring the effectiveness of community outreach programs in enhancing maritime safety awareness and preparedness among coastal communities.

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