

Lived Experiences of Parole and Probation Officers in a Highly Urbanized Area

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ABSTRACT

The Parole and Probation Administration (PPA) operates under the banner “Redeeming Lives, Restoring Relationships” through the various programs that aid offenders in their return back to society. At the core of these programs are the Parole and Probation Officers (PPOs) whose task is to administer these programs and assess whether or not these offenders are ready to be reintegrated back into society. This study focused on the lived experiences of the PPOs in a highly urbanized area. Specifically, it looked into their experiences while implementing the programs, the challenges they faced while implementing the programs, and their interaction with their clients. Phenomenological approach was used to analyze, discuss, and provide a methodological framework for the study. Five PPOs coming from a highly urbanized area were interviewed for this study. The interviews revealed that the overall success of the programs under the PPA is highly reliant on the collaboration of society with the PPOs in helping the offender re-enter society. The study also identified the lack of funding, and the highly bureaucratic processes within the PPA as the largest area of concern among PPOs. That is, as a result of this bureaucratic nature of the PPA, it translates to lesser manpower in addressing the high number of cases that the PPOs cater to. The participants shared that because of the lack of manpower and the influx of cases they handle they are unable to effectively and efficiently perform their task as mandated by law. This study recommends that further research should look into the impacts of the plea-bargaining policy towards the justice system and how the roles of PPOs are affected by it. Furthermore, research geared towards the current programs currently being implemented by the PPA is suggested by this study. Lastly, the national government should reassess its hiring practices and re-evaluate budget allocations for the PPA given that it is severely understaffed while the workload has been consistently increasing.