



Rebirth of Hope, Resilience and Optimism: Insights of Lakan Members in Their New Career Paths

Guilbert B. Mansueto¹, Dr Paulino V. Pioquinto², Dr. Yolanda C. Sayson³, Atty. Dodelon F. Sabijon, Ph. D⁴, Dr. Esmeraldo Damuag⁵, Dr. Renato C. Sagayno⁶

A Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Cebu Main Campus, Cebu City. In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Criminal Justice with specialization in Criminology

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51584/IJRIAS.2026.11050078>

Received: 01 May 2026; Accepted: 06 May 2026; Published: 30 May 2026

ABSTRACT

This study explored the lived experiences of Lakan members of the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA) who were administratively separated from the Philippine National Police (PNP), Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) and Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) and subsequently pursued new career paths within the field of criminal justice and public safety. Specifically, the study examined the experiences encountered by the informants after separation, the strategies they employed in rebuilding their lives and their present outlook toward their new career trajectories.

A qualitative transcendental phenomenological approach was used to explore the lived experiences of ten purposively selected Lakan members following their separation from uniformed service. Data were gathered through a Focus Group Discussion with six informants and Individual In-Depth Interviews with four informants in the Visayas region. Using validated semi-structured interview guides, the data were analyzed through horizontalization, thematic clustering and the synthesis of textural and structural descriptions.

The analysis generated fifteen emergent themes grouped into three major domains: experiences after administrative separation, strategies for rebuilding new careers and present life outlook. The findings revealed that separation initially resulted in identity disruption, stigma, financial instability and loss of institutional trust. However, through acceptance, discipline, faith, family support, professional networks and the rediscovery of transferable competencies, the informants were able to reconstruct meaningful careers and reaffirm their commitment to public service beyond the uniform.

The study concludes that administrative separation, while profoundly disruptive, can become a catalyst for personal growth, resilience and renewed purpose. It recommends the development of reintegration programs, counseling support and alum-based networks within the PNPA and its tri-bureau services to support separated officers in rebuilding productive and dignified lives.

Keywords: Lakan Members, Administrative Separation, Career Transition, Transcendental Phenomenology, Resilience.

INTRODUCTION

Across the globe, increasing scholarly attention has been directed toward the life transitions of uniformed personnel, particularly those involving involuntary separation from service. Studies on military veterans and law enforcement officers have consistently highlighted the psychological and social consequences of such transitions, including identity disruption, loss of belonging, stigma and reintegration challenges. At the same time, emerging research emphasizes the potential for post-adversity growth, demonstrating that individuals may develop renewed purpose and resilience following highly disruptive experiences.



In the Philippine context, the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA) serves as the premier institution for training commissioned officers for the Philippine National Police (PNP), Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) and Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP). Its graduates, known as Lakan members, undergo rigorous academic and paramilitary preparation designed to instill discipline, leadership and a strong sense of service. The Lakan identity carries both institutional and cultural significance, symbolizing honor, integrity and responsibility to protect the community.

While many PNPA graduates complete their careers in uniformed service, others experience administrative separation through dismissal or other disciplinary actions. Such involuntary exits often lead to profound personal and professional consequences, including emotional distress, social stigma, financial instability and disruption of identity. Despite these challenges, some separated Lakan members are able to reconstruct their lives, pursue alternative career paths and rediscover meaning, resilience and optimism beyond the uniform.

Existing research in the Philippines has largely focused on active-duty personnel, occupational stress and organizational performance. Although these studies provide valuable insights into the demands of uniformed service, they offer limited understanding of the experiences of those who have been administratively separated. In particular, the life trajectories, coping mechanisms and identity reconstruction processes of PNPA graduates who have undergone forced separation remain largely unexplored in both academic literature and public discourse.

The present study addresses this gap by examining the lived experiences of administratively separated Lakan members who have successfully transitioned into new careers. Drawing on Transition Theory, Self-Efficacy Theory and Resilience Theory, the study explores how individuals interpret their separation, mobilize internal and external resources and reconstruct their identities in the aftermath of institutional loss. These theoretical perspectives collectively provide a framework for understanding how individuals navigate change, sustain motivation and adapt positively to adversity.

Transition Theory emphasizes that life changes disrupt established roles, relationships and routines, requiring individuals to reinterpret their circumstances and mobilize coping resources. Self-Efficacy Theory highlights the role of belief in one's capabilities in shaping motivation, persistence and behavioral outcomes. Resilience Theory, in turn, explains how individuals adapt and reorganize in response to adversity through the interaction of personal strengths and environmental supports. Together, these frameworks offer a multidimensional lens for examining the complex processes of adjustment and reinvention.

In addition to theoretical considerations, this study is situated within a broader legal and institutional context. Philippine laws and administrative frameworks establish clear mechanisms for discipline and dismissal within uniformed services, ensuring accountability and adherence to professional standards. However, these frameworks primarily focus on regulation and enforcement, with limited attention given to post-separation support, reintegration or career transition. This absence of structured support systems further underscores the importance of understanding how separated personnel navigate life beyond service.

By focusing on Lakan members in the Visayas region, this study provides a contextually grounded perspective that reflects both institutional and cultural influences on transition experiences. Filipino values such as strong family ties, community solidarity and collective support systems play a significant role in shaping coping processes and resilience. These cultural dimensions highlight that adaptation is not solely an individual endeavor but is deeply embedded within relational and social contexts.

Ultimately, this study seeks to contribute to criminology, public administration and organizational studies by providing empirical insights into a largely underexplored population. It aims to illuminate how administratively separated Lakan members experience transition, rebuild their professional identities and cultivate renewed hope, resilience and optimism in forging meaningful post-service careers. In doing so, the study not only advances academic discourse but also informs policy development and support mechanisms for uniformed personnel undergoing similar life transitions.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a transcendental phenomenological design grounded in the works of Husserl and operationalized by Moustakas. This approach was selected to explore and describe the essence of the lived experiences of Lakan members who were administratively separated from uniformed service and subsequently reconstructed their professional and personal lives.

Transcendental phenomenology focuses on understanding how individuals perceive and make meaning of a phenomenon. In this study, it enabled the examination of both what the participants experienced and how they experienced the transition following administrative separation. To ensure rigor, the researcher practiced bracketing (*epoché*) by consciously setting aside personal assumptions and prior experiences, thereby allowing the participants' perspectives to emerge as the primary source of meaning.

Research Environment

The study was conducted in the Visayas region of the Philippines, focusing on Lakan members who were former graduates of the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA) and were administratively separated from the Philippine National Police (PNP), Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) and Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP).

The Visayas provided a relevant context due to its mix of urban and rural settings, strong community ties and cultural values that influence reintegration and coping processes. This setting allowed for the examination of how regional and socio-cultural factors shape the experiences of separated Lakan members as they transition to civilian life.

Research Informants

A total of ten (10) Lakan members participated in the study. Four (4) informants were involved in individual in-depth interviews, while six (6) participated in a Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Participants were selected through purposive and snowball sampling to ensure that they had direct experience of the phenomenon under investigation.

The inclusion criteria required that participants: (1) be graduates of the PNPA (Lakan); (2) have been administratively separated from the PNP, BFP or BJMP between 1995 and 2010; (3) have established new careers related to criminal justice or public safety; (4) be residing in the Visayas region; and (5) be willing to provide in-depth accounts of their experiences.

The sample included representation from the three bureaus, ensuring a balanced perspective across institutional backgrounds. Participants were engaged in various fields such as security management, consultancy, academe, disaster response and community safety initiatives.

Research Instruments

Data were collected using semi-structured interview guides and a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) guide. The instruments consisted of open-ended questions designed to elicit detailed narratives related to the participants' experiences, coping strategies and career transitions.

The interview guide was organized according to the study's research questions and was validated by experts in criminology, qualitative research and law enforcement. The semi-structured format allowed for consistency across interviews while providing flexibility for participants to express their perspectives fully.

The FGD guide facilitated collective reflection and validation of emerging themes, enabling participants to share insights, compare experiences and deepen the discussion of key issues.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection involved individual in-depth interviews and a Focus Group Discussion. Interviews lasted approximately 60 to 90 minutes and were conducted either face-to-face or through a secure online platform, depending on participant availability and logistical considerations. The FGD was conducted online to accommodate geographic constraints.

With informed consent, all sessions were audio recorded. Field notes were also taken to capture non-verbal cues, contextual observations and initial reflections. All recordings were transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy and completeness of the data.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using phenomenological procedures guided by Moustakas and supported by thematic analysis techniques. The analysis followed a systematic process that included:

- Transcription and Familiarization – Repeated reading of transcripts to gain immersion in the data.
- Horizontalization – Identification of significant statements related to the phenomenon.
- Coding and Clustering – Grouping of statements into meaning units and thematic clusters.
- Textural and Structural Description – Description of what was experienced and how it was experienced.
- Synthesis of Essence – Integration of findings to capture the core meaning of the lived experiences.
- Member checking was conducted to validate the accuracy of interpretations, ensuring that the findings reflected the participants' intended meanings.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to the ethical principles of beneficence, non-maleficence, autonomy and justice. Participants were fully informed about the purpose, procedures, risks and benefits of the study prior to participation and written informed consent was obtained.

Confidentiality was strictly maintained through the use of pseudonyms and secure data storage. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any time and to decline answering any question. The researcher conducted all interactions with sensitivity, particularly given the potentially distressing nature of discussing administrative separation.

This study involving human participants was reviewed and approved by the University Research Office of the University of Cebu. All participants provided informed consent prior to participation and the study adhered to established ethical standards for research involving human subjects.

Trustworthiness of the Study

To ensure rigor, the study followed established criteria for trustworthiness, including:

- Credibility through prolonged engagement, triangulation and member checking
- Transferability through detailed contextual descriptions
- Dependability through an audit trail and consistent procedures
- Confirmability through reflexivity and peer debriefing

Bracketing and reflexivity were continuously practiced to minimize researcher bias and ensure that interpretations were grounded in participants' lived experiences.

RESULTS

The phenomenological analysis generated fifteen (15) emergent themes organized into three major domains: (1) experiences following administrative separation, (2) strategies toward rebuilding new career paths and (3) present life outlook. These themes collectively capture the disruption, adaptation and identity reconstruction experienced by the Lakan members after separation from uniformed service.

Experiences Following Administrative Separation.

This domain reflects the immediate and lived consequences of administrative separation, including emotional disruption, stigma, financial instability, family pressures and institutional disillusionment.

Shattered Professional Identity and Emotional Dislocation

Administrative separation emerged as a deeply destabilizing experience that disrupted the informants' professional identity and emotional stability. The loss of the uniform represented not merely the end of employment but the collapse of a role that had long defined their sense of self, purpose and belonging. Many informants described feelings of confusion, grief and uncertainty as they struggled to redefine themselves outside institutional life.

One informant described the experience as “a strong sense of loss—of identity, stability and direction,” illustrating the emotional dislocation that accompanied separation. Another participant shared that “wearing the uniform had been my dream since the Academy and suddenly it was stripped away,” reflecting the depth of attachment to the profession.

These narratives indicate that administrative separation was experienced not only as occupational loss but also as an existential disruption that challenged personal identity and future direction.

Shame, Stigma and Social Withdrawal.

The findings revealed that administrative separation carried significant social stigma that extended beyond institutional consequences. Informants perceived themselves as judged, misunderstood and socially labeled, leading to feelings of embarrassment and diminished self-worth.

Several participants reported intentionally withdrawing from social interactions to avoid public scrutiny and difficult conversations regarding their separation. One informant admitted that he “initially distanced” himself from others due to embarrassment and uncertainty about how to explain his circumstances.

Another participant expressed concern that “the stigma associated with administrative separation might limit future employment opportunities,” highlighting the enduring impact of reputational damage on reintegration and career rebuilding.

These experiences demonstrate how stigma contributed to emotional isolation and complicated the transition process.

Financial Instability and Survival Pressure.

Administrative separation resulted in immediate financial disruption, particularly for informants who served as primary providers for their families. The sudden loss of salary, benefits and professional security intensified emotional stress and redirected attention toward economic survival.

Informants described experiencing uncertainty regarding financial obligations, family needs and long-term stability. One participant recalled constantly worrying about “how to provide for my family” after separation,

while another described the experience as a period dominated by “fear of not being able to recover financially.”

The findings suggest that financial instability became both a practical and psychological burden that shaped decision-making and influenced the urgency of career reinvention.

Family Burden, Responsibility and Shared Resilience.

Although separation imposed emotional and financial strain on families, the findings also revealed the important role of family support in sustaining resilience. Informants consistently identified their responsibilities as husbands, fathers and providers as major sources of motivation during periods of uncertainty.

One participant explained that “giving up was never an option because my family depended on me,” reflecting how family obligations reinforced perseverance despite adversity. Others emphasized that emotional encouragement from spouses and children helped them regain confidence and maintain hope during difficult transitions.

These narratives indicate that family functioned both as a source of pressure and as a protective support system that strengthened resilience and recovery.

Loss of Institutional Trust and Forced Self-Reliance.

The findings further revealed a significant loss of trust in institutional systems following administrative separation. Informants described feelings of abandonment, disappointment and disillusionment toward the organizations they once served. Several participants perceived that they were left to navigate the consequences of separation alone, without guidance or reintegration support. One informant stated that “after separation, you realize that you are completely on your own,” reflecting the transition from institutional dependence to self-reliance.

Despite these experiences, the findings suggest that forced independence also encouraged personal accountability and adaptive problem-solving, prompting informants to rebuild their lives through their own initiative and determination.

Strategies Toward New Career Paths.

This domain captures the coping mechanisms, adaptive strategies and intentional actions employed by the informants to reconstruct their professional and personal lives after separation.

1. Acceptance and Cognitive Reframing as Turning Points.

Acceptance emerged as a critical turning point in the transition process. Informants described gradually shifting from denial, anger and self-blame toward acceptance and forward-oriented thinking. Several participants explained that reframing separation as an opportunity for redirection rather than permanent failure enabled them to regain motivation and emotional stability. One informant reflected that “the moment I accepted what happened was also the moment I started rebuilding.”

These findings indicate that cognitive reframing facilitated emotional recovery and enabled the informants to reinterpret adversity in more constructive and future-oriented ways.

2. Discipline, Resilience and Cadetship Conditioning as Survival Anchors.

The discipline and mental conditioning developed through PNPA training remained significant coping resources after separation. Informants consistently emphasized that the values and routines learned during cadetship helped them endure adversity and maintain focus during uncertain periods.



One participant stated that “the Academy trained us never to quit regardless of circumstances,” while another explained that discipline provided “structure and stability when everything else collapsed.”

These findings suggest that prior institutional training continued to influence behavior and resilience even beyond formal service.

3. Faith, Spiritual Reflection and Meaning-Making.

Faith and spirituality played a central role in helping informants process emotional pain and reconstruct meaning after separation. Participants frequently described prayer, reflection and spiritual surrender as important coping mechanisms during periods of uncertainty.

One informant shared that “faith helped me accept that life still had purpose beyond the uniform,” while another described spirituality as a source of emotional grounding and hope.

The findings indicate that spiritual meaning-making supported acceptance, emotional regulation and renewed optimism.

4. Brotherhood, Peer Support and Collective Validation.

Peer relationships and Lakan brotherhood emerged as important sources of emotional validation and encouragement. Informants emphasized that fellow Lakans provided understanding and support that others could not easily offer due to shared experiences and institutional culture.

One participant stated that “only another Lakan truly understands the weight of separation,” highlighting the significance of collective identity and peer empathy.

These findings demonstrate that brotherhood reduced isolation, restored confidence and reinforced a sense of belonging during transition.

5. Rediscovery of Transferable Competence and Professional Worth.

The findings revealed that informants gradually recognized that the competencies acquired during uniformed service remained valuable in civilian and professional contexts. Skills such as leadership, discipline, crisis management and strategic thinking were perceived as transferable and adaptable across various occupations.

One informant explained that “the skills learned in service did not disappear after separation,” while another realized that “leadership and decision-making remained relevant beyond law enforcement.”

This recognition contributed to renewed self-confidence and facilitated career reinvention.

6. Strategic Career Rebuilding through Learning, Service and Innovation.

Informants actively pursued new opportunities through continuous learning, professional networking, entrepreneurship and service-oriented work. Many engaged in further education, certifications, consultancy, teaching, or security-related professions to establish new career identities.

One participant shared that “continuous learning became necessary to prove I still had value,” while another emphasized the importance of adapting to “new industries and new ways of working.”

The findings indicate that career rebuilding was a deliberate and evolving process grounded in adaptability, initiative and sustained personal development.

Present Life Outlook.

This domain reflects the reconstructed identity, renewed purpose and future-oriented perspectives developed by the informants following their transition.

1. Redemption through Integrity, Accountability and Ethical Living.

Informants described redemption not as institutional reinstatement but as the restoration of dignity through ethical living, accountability and personal growth. Many emphasized the importance of learning from past experiences and living with greater humility and integrity.

One participant reflected that “real redemption came from becoming a better person, not from recovering rank or position.”

These findings suggest that redemption was understood as an ongoing process of self-improvement and moral reconstruction.

2. Continuity of Service beyond the Uniform.

Despite separation from formal institutions, the informants maintained a strong commitment to service. Many continued contributing through teaching, security work, consultancy, mentoring and community engagement.

One informant stated that “service did not end with the uniform,” emphasizing that public service had become part of personal identity rather than merely occupational duty.

The findings indicate that service remained a continuing source of meaning and purpose beyond institutional affiliation.

3. Reconstructed Lakan Identity Rooted in Enduring Values.

The findings revealed that informants reconstructed their identity around enduring values such as integrity, discipline, courage, accountability and commitment to others. Rather than abandoning their Lakan identity, they redefined it beyond institutional status.

One participant explained that “being a Lakan is no longer about rank or position but about character and values.”

These narratives demonstrate that identity reconstruction involved continuity rather than complete detachment from the past.

4. Renewed Hope, Optimism and Future-Oriented Purpose.

The informants ultimately expressed a more hopeful and optimistic outlook toward life and the future. Having endured adversity and uncertainty, they developed greater confidence in their ability to adapt, contribute and pursue meaningful goals. One participant reflected that “life did not end after separation; it simply changed direction,” while another emphasized that the experience ultimately “made me stronger and more purposeful.” The findings suggest that administrative separation, although deeply disruptive, eventually became a catalyst for resilience, growth and renewed purpose.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that administrative separation constitutes a deeply disruptive transition that extends beyond occupational loss and affects identity, social relationships, emotional wellbeing and future direction. The lived experiences of the informants reveal that separation from uniformed service is not merely

an administrative outcome but a transformative life event requiring substantial psychological and social adjustment.

The theme of shattered professional identity supports Schlossberg's Transition Theory, which posits that transitions disrupt established roles, routines and assumptions about the self. Similar to the reintegration experiences described by Demers (2011), the informants experienced a profound sense of identity dislocation following separation from a highly structured and symbolically significant institution. However, unlike studies involving planned retirement or voluntary career transitions, the present findings highlight the distinct emotional intensity associated with involuntary separation, particularly within a profession where identity is closely tied to honor, authority and public service.

The findings on stigma and social withdrawal are likewise consistent with literature on occupational identity loss among former military and law enforcement personnel. Cooper et al. (2018) noted that former officers often struggle with diminished social standing and difficulties integrating into civilian environments. In the present study, stigma was intensified by the cultural importance of reputation and public perception within Filipino society. This suggests that the social consequences of administrative separation may be more pronounced in collectivist settings, where identity and social acceptance are strongly interconnected.

Financial instability also emerged as a central challenge during transition. Existing transition literature recognizes economic uncertainty as a significant stressor during involuntary career change; however, the findings of this study further demonstrate how financial pressures intersected with cultural expectations surrounding family responsibility. Informants consistently prioritized their roles as providers despite emotional distress, reflecting the influence of Filipino family-centered values described by Medina (2001). This finding extends current transition literature by illustrating how cultural obligations may intensify both stress and motivation during periods of occupational disruption.

The study also highlights the important role of family and peer support in facilitating adaptation. Consistent with Anderson et al. (2012), social support functioned as a protective factor that reduced isolation and reinforced emotional stability. However, the findings suggest that support among Lakan members extended beyond ordinary peer interaction and reflected a form of collective validation grounded in shared institutional experiences. This collective dimension reinforces Ungar's (2011) assertion that resilience is socially and culturally embedded rather than purely individual.

The strategies employed by the informants further demonstrate the interaction between self-efficacy and resilience during transition. Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory emphasizes that confidence in one's capabilities shapes motivation and persistence. The findings support this perspective, particularly in relation to the rediscovery of transferable competence. Informants gradually recognized that leadership, discipline and crisis-management skills remained valuable beyond uniformed service, thereby restoring confidence and enabling career reinvention.

Nevertheless, the findings also suggest that self-efficacy in the context of administrative separation is not solely an individual cognitive process. While Bandura primarily emphasized personal beliefs and mastery experiences, the present study indicates that efficacy beliefs among separated Lakan members were strongly reinforced by social validation, peer encouragement and family support. This reflects the collectivist orientation of Filipino culture, where confidence and resilience are often strengthened through relational networks rather than individual achievement alone.

The findings regarding resilience likewise support Masten's conceptualization of resilience as a dynamic adaptive process rather than a fixed personality trait. Informants demonstrated resilience through gradual recovery, strategic adaptation and meaning reconstruction despite emotional and professional disruption. Similar to Tedeschi and Calhoun's concept of post-traumatic growth, the participants did not merely recover from adversity but developed renewed purpose and greater self-awareness through the experience.

However, the present findings also challenge overly individualistic interpretations of resilience. Existing resilience literature sometimes emphasizes personal coping capacities while overlooking institutional and structural barriers. In this study, the absence of formal reintegration or aftercare mechanisms forced many informants to rely heavily on informal support systems and personal initiative. This suggests that resilience should not be interpreted solely as individual strength but also as a response shaped by the availability or absence of institutional support.

The findings further reveal that identity reconstruction among separated Lakan members was grounded in enduring values rather than institutional affiliation. Informants maintained continuity in their sense of service, integrity and discipline even after the loss of formal roles. This contrasts with literature suggesting that occupational separation necessarily results in identity fragmentation. Instead, the study demonstrates that values-based identity may enable continuity and psychological stability despite institutional disengagement.

Overall, the study contributes to the growing body of literature on career transition, resilience and occupational identity by providing a culturally grounded understanding of administrative separation within the Philippine uniformed services context. The findings demonstrate that transition after separation is not linear but involves ongoing negotiation between loss, adaptation, identity reconstruction and renewed purpose. Through this process, the informants transformed a disruptive life event into an opportunity for growth, service and meaningful reinvention.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study explored the lived experiences of administratively separated Lakan members and examined how they navigated transition, reconstructed identity and established new career paths following separation from uniformed service. The findings demonstrate that administrative separation is a multidimensional experience characterized by identity disruption, emotional distress, social stigma, financial instability and diminished institutional trust.

Despite these challenges, the informants demonstrated the capacity to adapt through acceptance, discipline, resilience, faith, peer support and continuous learning. These adaptive processes enabled them to restore confidence, rediscover professional competence and pursue meaningful forms of service beyond institutional affiliation. The findings further reveal that the identity of separated Lakan members did not disappear following administrative separation but was reconstructed around enduring values such as integrity, accountability, discipline and commitment to service.

The study affirms the relevance of Transition Theory, Self-Efficacy Theory and Resilience Theory in understanding how separated uniformed personnel navigate disruption and recovery. However, the findings also highlight the importance of relational and cultural influences in shaping resilience and self-efficacy within the Philippine context. Family responsibility, collective validation and peer brotherhood emerged as significant factors that reinforced adaptation and recovery, suggesting that transition experiences in collectivist societies are deeply embedded within social relationships and shared identities.

Overall, the study concludes that administrative separation, while initially experienced as a deeply disruptive event, may also become a catalyst for transformation, renewal and purposeful reinvention. The lived experiences of the informants demonstrate that hope, resilience and optimism remain attainable beyond institutional loss when individuals are supported by meaningful relationships, adaptive coping mechanisms and enduring personal values.

The findings further suggest the need for institutional mechanisms that support administratively separated personnel during transition and reintegration. Structured aftercare initiatives, career transition programs, psycho-social support services and peer-support networks may assist separated personnel in managing emotional distress, rebuilding professional identity and pursuing sustainable career opportunities beyond uniformed service. Educational institutions, practitioners and policy advocates may likewise utilize the findings in

developing interventions related to organizational justice, occupational transition and resilience-building among former uniformed personnel.

Future studies may expand the investigation to larger and more geographically diverse populations, including participants from Luzon and Mindanao, to improve the transferability of findings. Further research may also examine the experiences of Lakambinis and other female uniformed personnel to better understand how gender, institutional culture and societal expectations influence transition, resilience and identity reconstruction. Quantitative and mixed-methods studies may likewise be conducted to further examine the relationships among resilience, self-efficacy, social support and career adaptation among separated uniformed personnel.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researcher sincerely extends his heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has supported and mentored him throughout the completion of this dissertation.

First and foremost, the researcher gives thanks to God Almighty for granting him the courage, wisdom, strength and perseverance to begin and successfully complete this academic endeavor. Through every challenge and moment of doubt, His guidance remained constant.

Second, the researcher is profoundly grateful to his loving wife, Brenda and his son, Guilbert Ace, whose patience, understanding and unconditional support made every obstacle bearable and every milestone meaningful.

Third, the researcher extends his sincere gratitude to the informants of this study. Their trust, openness and willingness to share their lived experiences made this research possible and meaningful.

Lastly, the researcher conveys his deepest appreciation to Dr. Paulino V. Pioquinto, Ph.D., his dissertation adviser, for his consistent guidance, patience and scholarly direction. He likewise extends his gratitude to Dr. Yolanda C. Sayson, Atty. Dodelon F. Sabijon, Ph.D., Dr. Esmeraldo Damuag and Dr. Renato C. Sagayno, members of the panel, for their valuable insights, constructive recommendations and encouragement that strengthened this dissertation.

To all who have been part of this journey, the researcher offers his sincere thanks and lasting appreciation.

- Guilbert B. Mansueto

REFERENCES

1. Bandura, A. (1977). *Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change*. Psychological Review Press.
2. Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. W. H. Freeman.
3. Bridges, W. (2004). *Transitions: Making sense of life's changes* (2nd ed.). Da Capo Press.
4. Colaizzi, P. F. (1978). Psychological research as the phenomenologist views it. In R. S. Valle & M. King (Eds.), *Existential phenomenological alternatives for psychology* (pp. 48–71). Oxford University Press.
5. Enriquez, V. G. (1992). *From colonial to liberation psychology: The Philippine experience*. University of the Philippines Press.
6. Husserl, E. (1931). *Ideas: General introduction to pure phenomenology*. George Allen & Unwin.
7. Jocano, F. L. (1999). *Working with Filipinos: A cross-cultural experience*. Punlad Research House.
8. Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage Publications.
9. Masten, A. S. (2001). *Ordinary magic: Resilience processes in development*. American Psychologist Press.
10. Medina, B. T. G. (2001). *The Filipino family* (2nd ed.). University of the Philippines Press.
11. Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Sage Publications.

12. Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
13. Tedeschi, R. G., & Calhoun, L. G. (2004). *Post traumatic growth: Conceptual foundations and empirical evidence*. Psychological Inquiry Press.
14. Schlossberg, N. K. (1981). A model for analyzing human adaptation to transition. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 9(2), 2–18.

Journals / Scholarly Articles

1. Agbayani-Siewert, P., & Revilla, L. (1995). Filipino Americans and their coping strategies. *Families in Society*, 76(3), 193–201.
2. Anderson, M. L., Goodman, J., & Schlossberg, N. K. (2012). *Counseling adults in transition* (4th ed.). Springer.
3. Bonanno, G. A. (2004). Loss, trauma and human resilience. *American Psychologist*, 59(1), 20–28.
4. Cooper, C., et al. (2018). Transition experiences of former military personnel. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*.
5. Cruz, J. (2024). Occupational stress and aggression among police personnel. *Philippine Journal of Criminology*.
6. Demers, A. (2011). When veterans return: The role of community in reintegration. *Journal of Loss and Trauma*, 16(2), 160–179.
7. Denzin, N. K. (1989). *Interpretive interactionism*. Qualitative Research Methods Series.
8. Finlay, L. (2002). Negotiating the swamp: Reflexivity in research practice. *Qualitative Research*, 2(2), 209–230.
9. Fugate, M., Kinicki, A. J., & Ashforth, B. E. (2004). Employability: A psycho-social construct. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 65(1), 14–38.
10. Ibarra, H. (2003). *Working identity: Unconventional strategies for reinventing your career*. Harvard Business School Press.
11. Lopez, R. (2024). Occupational stress and coping among police officers. *Philippine Journal of Public Safety*.
12. Olivar, R., et al. (2024). Resilience and mental health among police personnel. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*.
13. Papagayo, M. (2024). Work-life balance and psychological wellbeing. *Philippine Social Science Review*.
14. Papazoglou, K., & Andersen, J. P. (2014). Police resilience training. *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology*, 29(2), 120–129.
15. Pasquin, J. (2023). Resilience and coping among police personnel in Iloilo. *Philippine Journal of Criminology*.
16. Patton, M. Q. (1999). Enhancing quality and credibility in qualitative analysis. *Health Services Research*, 34(5), 1189–1208.
17. Resurreccion, A. (2024). Quality of life and resilience among police officers. *Philippine Journal of Behavioral Science*.
18. Savickas, M. L., & Porfeli, E. J. (2012). Career adaptability. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 80(3), 661–673.
19. Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness. *Education for Information*, 22(2), 63–75.
20. Tedeschi, R. G., & Calhoun, L. G. (2004). Post-traumatic growth. *Psychological Inquiry*, 15(1), 1–18.
21. Tuason, M. T. (2013). Filipino resilience and coping. *Journal of Pacific Rim Psychology*, 7(2), 107–120.
22. Ungar, M. (2011). The social ecology of resilience. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 81(1), 1–17.
23. van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience*. State University of New York Press.
24. Westwood, M. J., et al. (2010). Group-based interventions for veterans. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 57(1), 1–10.

Internet Sources / Legal / Policy Sources

25. Belmont Report. (1979). Ethical principles and guidelines for the protection of human subjects of research. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/belmont-report/>
26. Beauchamp, T. L., & Childress, J. F. (2019). Principles of biomedical ethics (8th ed.). Oxford University Press.
27. Republic Act No. 6975. (1990). Department of the Interior and Local Government Act of 1990. Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph>
28. Republic Act No. 8551. (1998). Philippine National Police Reform and Reorganization Act. Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph>
29. Republic Act No. 11279. (2019). An Act transferring the Philippine National Police Academy to the PNP. Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph>
30. Republic Act No. 6770. (1989). An Act Providing for the Functional and Structural Organization of the Office of the Ombudsman and for Other Purposes (Ombudsman Act of 1989). Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1989/11/17/republic-act-no-6770/>
31. Presidential Decree No. 1780. (1981). Providing for the Professionalization of the Integrated National Police under the Ministry of National Defense. Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1981/01/16/presidential-decree-no-1780-s-1981/>
32. Civil Service Commission. (2017). Revised Rules on Administrative Cases in the Civil Service (RACCS). <https://www.csc.gov.ph>
33. Republic Act No. 6770. (1989). An Act Providing for the Functional and Structural Organization of the Office of the Ombudsman and for Other Purposes (Ombudsman Act of 1989). Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1989/11/17/republic-act-no-6770/>
34. Presidential Decree No. 1780. (1981). Providing for the Professionalization of the Integrated National Police under the Ministry of National Defense. Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1981/01/16/presidential-decree-no-1780-s-1981/>
35. Civil Service Commission. (2017). Revised Rules on Administrative Cases in the Civil Service (RACCS). <https://www.csc.gov.ph>