

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY: APPLIED BUSINESS AND EDUCATION RESEARCH

2025, Vol. 6, No. 4, 2070 – 2085

<http://dx.doi.org/10.11594/ijmaber.06.04.34>

Research Article

Community Satisfaction with Zamboanga City Jail Services: Toward a Trust Rating Index

Laiza Jane L Polingga-Villa^{1*}, Erizha Mae Aznar², Ezrha Joy F Noceda², Jay Rim R Villa³

¹Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), 8002, Digos City, Davao del Sur, Philippines

²Faculty- CCJE, De La Salle University-Dasmariñas, 4118, Dasmariñas, Cavite, Philippines

³Philippine National Police (PNP), 4117, GMA, Cavite, Philippines

Article history:

Submission 03 March 2025

Revised 31 March 2025

Accepted 23 April 2025

*Corresponding author:

E-mail:

ljpolingga@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study assesses the levels of trust, respect, and satisfaction among clients of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) in Zamboanga City Jail. As a vital institution within the Philippine correctional system, the BJMP plays a key role in upholding humane safekeeping and rehabilitation. Understanding client perceptions within this facility provides valuable insights into the effectiveness and quality of jail management and service delivery. Rooted in the constitutional principle that “public office is a public trust,” the research addresses a critical gap in empirical data on public perception of jail institutions. Using a descriptive research design, the study surveyed 300 respondents—persons deprived of liberty (PDL), their family members, and service providers—selected through purposive sampling. A validated questionnaire measured perceptions of trust, respect, and service satisfaction.

Findings revealed a consistently high level of trust (overall trust index of 97%) and satisfaction across all groups, with mean scores above 5.70 on a six-point scale, indicating a “Very High” verbal interpretation. One-Way ANOVA results showed no significant differences among the groups’ responses ($p = 0.42$), suggesting equitable service perception across stakeholders. These outcomes demonstrate the effectiveness of BJMP’s rehabilitation programs and the strong institutional culture of transparency, professionalism, and mutual respect.

The study concludes that high trust and satisfaction levels are key indicators of institutional performance and public confidence. It recommends institutionalizing a Trust Rating Index, enhancing communication strategies, and fostering research collaborations to further professionalize BJMP services and strengthen stakeholder engagement in correctional reform.

Keywords: *Community Satisfaction, Trust, Respect, Service, Trust Rating Index*

How to cite:

Polingga-Villa, L. J. L., Aznar, E. M., Noceda, E. J. F., & Villa, J. R. R. (2025). Community Satisfaction with Zamboanga City Jail Services: Toward a Trust Rating Index. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research*, 6(4), 2070 – 2085. doi: 10.11594/ijmaber.06.04.34

Introduction

Article XI of the 1987 Philippine Constitution asserts that “public office is a public trust,” requiring all public officials and employees to serve with “utmost responsibility, integrity, loyalty, and efficiency.” This principle highlights not only a moral obligation but also a foundational expectation for public institutions to earn and sustain the trust of the people they serve, (Official Gazette, 1987). Within the law enforcement and correctional sectors—particularly the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP)—public trust becomes even more critical, as these institutions hold significant authority is closely tied to humane treatment, justice, and public accountability.

Public trust is a cornerstone of effective governance. It fosters voluntary compliance with laws and policies, enhances institutional legitimacy, and facilitates better service delivery (Dincecco, 2017; OECD, 2013). However, trust must be actively cultivated—it does not exist automatically but must be earned through transparent, efficient, and ethical governance (Del Mundo, 2020). A decline in public trust poses serious challenges for democratic institutions and can undermine policy effectiveness (Beshi & Kaur, 2019; Dann, 2022). In the Philippine setting, Incarceration deeply affects the mental and physical health of individuals, exacerbating existing health issues and creating additional challenges. The lack of trust in correctional facilities, particularly in health services, poses a significant barrier to effective care delivery. For example, mistrust affects how inmates perceive and interact with healthcare services, which can lead to poor health outcomes and reduced participation in essential health interventions (Cassarino et al., 2023).

Despite extensive global research on trust in government, studies that focus specifically on correctional facilities remain limited. In the Philippine context, there is a lack of systematic assessment of trust in jail management, particularly within the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP). While general trust ratings in national government agencies like the Philippine National Police (PNP) have been consistently high (Mateo, 2023; DILG, 2022), trust in jail services has not received adequate

empirical scrutiny. Furthermore, recent surveys reflect a concerning downward trend in trust and approval ratings of various government agencies (Mendoza, 2024), highlighting the urgency of interventions aimed at restoring public confidence. Respect in jail environments is equally crucial. In the Philippines, where overcrowding and insufficient resources are persistent issues, respect-based interactions between inmates and correctional officers can greatly influence the inmates' mental health and compliance with institutional protocols (Monceda et al., 2021). A study indicates that respectful engagement can reduce hostility and improve conditions within the facility (Alipoyo, 2022). Moreover, creating a safe and dignified environment promotes positive behaviors among the incarcerated, contributing to a reduction in recidivism and enabling successful rehabilitation. Developing protocols that emphasize respectful communication can enhance interaction levels and cultivate a more collaborative community within facilities (Comartin et al., 2021).

In correctional settings, trust is not just a public perception issue—it directly affects internal operations, safety, and rehabilitation. Trust within jail institutions contributes to compliance, reduces conflict, and promotes dignity in the treatment of persons deprived of liberty (PDL). For PDLs, trust in correctional officers can serve as a proxy for perceptions of fairness, safety, and humane treatment (Felix et al., 2023). Otto (2023) emphasizes that trust within an organization correlates positively with cooperation, innovation, and overall effectiveness. Thus, trust is not only an ethical imperative but a performance driver. Service delivery is inherently linked to successful rehabilitation outcomes in jails. Access to mental health and substance use disorder treatments within jail settings is essential, given the prevalence of these issues among incarcerated populations. In the Philippine context, there remains a disparity in behavioral health service availability, significantly affecting inmates' post-release outcomes (Krawczyk et al., 2022). A systematic improvement in service delivery can enhance health outcomes during incarceration and ease the transition back into society,

thereby minimizing repeat offenses (Bernard et al., 2020).

Respect and dignity are also essential elements of jail management. The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules) emphasize that all prisoners must be treated with respect for their inherent dignity. Research shows that when inmates perceive fairness and humane treatment, trust in the institution improves, leading to better compliance and participation in developmental programs (Jackson et al., 2022).

Client satisfaction and community perception serve as a tangible measure of institutional performance. Surveys measuring satisfaction, widely used in local government units, serve as essential tools for evaluating service delivery and informing policy directions (Boyle, 2020; Wavetec, 2024). Studies by Lardizabal et al. (2023) and Gamo and Park (2023) affirm that satisfaction reflects the extent to which public institutions meet their clients' needs, thereby reinforcing public trust. In jails, assessing satisfaction among visitors, service providers, and even the PDL population can provide actionable insights into institutional strengths and gaps in service.

The BJMP's J.A.I.L. Plan 2040 demonstrates the agency's commitment to becoming a world-class correctional institution dedicated to humane safekeeping and developmental services aligned with the national development agenda "Ambisyon Natin 2040." A key component of this strategic vision is building strong community ties and reinforcing public trust. However, realizing these goals requires localized, data-driven assessments that reflect the actual experiences and perceptions of clients in individual facilities such as the Zamboanga City Jail.

While the BJMP has made substantial strides in professionalization and infrastructure development, public trust in many government institutions remains volatile. Recent national surveys reveal a growing trust gap, particularly in sectors related to law enforcement and corrections (Dann, 2022; Mendoza, 2024). Although some agencies—like TESDA and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP)—maintain high trust ratings, others face fluctuating levels of public confidence, pointing to a

broader issue of institutional credibility (Mateo, 2023; EON, 2021).

This research seeks to address this critical gap by developing a Trust Rating Index for the Zamboanga City Jail, which houses over 2,200 PDLs as of December 2023. The study will examine levels of trust, respect, and satisfaction among its clients—PDL, their families, and service providers—and explore how these perceptions relate to service delivery and institutional accountability. Measuring and improving trust, respect, and service quality in jails is not merely a matter of enhancing the current systems but a vital strategy for fostering healthier, more supportive corrections environments. The implications of these improvements extend beyond the walls of jails, influencing public health outcomes and societal reintegration processes. As the Philippines continues to face challenges in its correctional system, prioritizing these elements can lead to substantial reforms that benefit both incarcerated individuals and the community at large. It also seeks to understand how the implementation of BJMP programs affects public trust and satisfaction, to provide evidence-based recommendations to enhance organizational performance and transparency.

Objective of the Study

This study aims to assess the trust index in the Zamboanga City Jail among three (3) groups of stakeholders—Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL), their family members, and service providers. Specifically, it seeks to:

1. Determine the level of trust the community has in the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) through the Zamboanga City Jail.
2. Assess the level of satisfaction among the three (3) groups of respondents in terms of:
 - Trust
 - Respect
 - Services rendered by Zamboanga City Jail
3. Identify whether there is a significant difference among the three (3) groups of respondents in their assessment of trust, respect, and services.

4. Propose a responsive feedback mechanism based on the findings to improve BJMP service delivery and foster stronger community trust.

Hypothesis of the Study

This study sought to test the null hypothesis:

H0: There is no significant difference in the assessments of the three (3) groups of respondents on the level of trust, respect, and services at Zamboanga City Jail.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed the descriptive research design to assess the levels of trust, respect, and service satisfaction within the Zamboanga City Jail under the jurisdiction of BJMP Regional Office IX. The descriptive method is appropriate for this study as it allows the researcher to systematically gather, analyze, and interpret data related to the perceptions and experiences of the respondents. It is particularly effective in identifying patterns,

establishing relationships, and providing insights that may inform future interventions and improvements in jail management and public service delivery.

Research Locale

The research was conducted at Zamboanga City Jail, which had a population of 2,200 PDL as of December 13, 2023. The facility is under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology Regional Office IX.

Participants of the Study

The study involved three distinct respondent groups: Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL) housed at Zamboanga City Jail, Family members of PDL, and Service providers (e.g., medical personnel, educators, religious groups, legal officers). The total population included 2,072 PDLs as of December 13, 2023.

Sampling Technique

Further, using purposive sampling, the researcher selected 10% from each group to ensure a balanced and informed representation.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents

Research Respondents	Total No. of Respondents	10% of the Total Number of Respondents
Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL)	2,200	220
Service Providers	40	4
Family of PDL	759	75.9 (76)
TOTAL	2,874	300

Instrumentation and Validation

A survey questionnaire was crafted based on the BJMP Operational Manual and other relevant regulations. The instrument included items on:

- Respondents' profiles
- Their satisfaction regarding trust, respect, and services

To ensure reliability and validity:

- The questionnaire was reviewed and revised under the guidance of the researcher's thesis adviser, Dr. Elizabeth B. Villa, Ph.D.

- Expert validation was conducted by professionals in welfare, public safety, and correctional administration.
- The internal consistency of the instrument was tested using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a satisfactory reliability coefficient (e.g., $\alpha \geq 0.70$).

Data Gathering Procedure

1. Secured ethical clearance from De La Salle University-Dasmariñas IERC.
2. Sent request letters to BJMP Regional Office IX and the Zamboanga City Jail administration.

3. Conducted a courtesy visit to coordinate protocol-compliant data gathering.
4. Distributed informed consent forms before administering the validated questionnaires.
5. Ensured anonymity, confidentiality, and voluntary participation throughout the data collection process.

Data Analysis

- Descriptive statistics (mean, frequency, and percentage) were used to summarize the data.
- Inferential statistics included One-Way ANOVA (Single Factor) to identify significant differences in responses among the three groups.

- All data were encoded and processed using Microsoft Excel under the guidance of a statistician

Ethical Consideration

It is important to note that the study was conducted based on the respondents' voluntary informed consent. This means that the research project, including its purpose, objectives, and methods, was thoroughly explained to the participants. They were made aware of the nature of their involvement, who would have access to their data, and how the data would be used and stored. Furthermore, respondents were informed of their right to refuse participation and were made aware of the potential uses of the collected data.

Results and Discussion

Table 2. Trust Index of Bureau of Jail Management and Penology-Zamboanga City Jail

Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL)	Family of Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL)	Service Providers	Overall Trust Index
97%	97%	94%	97%

The trust index for BJMP-ZCJ, as seen in Table 2, shows a consistently high level of trust across all respondent groups: 97% for PDL, 97% for their families, and 94% for service providers. This results in an overall trust index of 97%, indicating strong confidence in the BJMP's ability to perform its duties effectively. These findings are in line with the work of Pajarillo and Martinez (2018), who identified moderate satisfaction levels among detainees regarding jail services. Their study emphasized

that BJMP's services, while compliant with regulations, still exhibit areas for improvement. Furthermore, Lopez (2020) stressed the importance of a rehabilitative prison culture (RPC) that incorporates both staff and families in rehabilitation efforts. The high trust levels observed in this study may be partially attributed to BJMP's success in engaging these key groups in a collaborative rehabilitation process, which enhances trust and security within the institution.

Table 2.1 Respondents Level of Satisfaction on the Trust in BJMP

Indicators	Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL)		Family of PDL		Service Providers		Total	
	Mean	VI	Mean	VI	Mean	VI	Mean	VI
1. Bureau of Jail and Management and Penology (BJMP) personnel perform their duties honestly, certainty, and impartially.	5.85	Very High	5.90	Very High	5.89	Very High	5.87	Very High Rank 1
2. I immediately notify BJMP personnel when	5.89	Very High	5.85	Very High	5.78	Very High	5.87	Very High

Indicators	Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL)		Family of PDL		Service Providers		Total	
	Mean	VI	Mean	VI	Mean	VI	Mean	VI
I see or become aware of information about Person Deprived of Liberty (PDL) escapes and/ or any illegal activity that will compromise the security and safety of the jail near my area.								Rank 1
3. Every BJMP personnel in our area is doing what is right for the community and true to their oath.	5.82	Very High	5.85	Very High	5.67	Very High	5.82	Very High
								Rank 2
4. BJMP personnel are always reliable and approachable.	5.81	Very High	5.82	Very High	5.65	Very High	5.80	Very High
								Rank 3
5. BJMP personnel do not do any illegal acts and activities.	5.80	Very High	5.75	Very High	5.56	Very High	5.77	Very High
								Rank 4

Table 2.1 presents the respondents' level of satisfaction regarding their trust in BJMP personnel. All groups rated BJMP personnel highly, with the overall mean scores ranging from 5.56 to 5.89, indicating a "Very High" level of trust. The highest score (5.89) was given for the item, "I immediately notify BJMP personnel when I see or become aware of information about PDL escapes and/or any illegal activity." This highlights the active cooperation between BJMP personnel and the respondents, which is crucial for maintaining security within the jail system.

The uniformity of these ratings suggests that BJMP's efforts in promoting honesty, reliability, and professionalism have been largely successful. These findings echo Tyler's (2021) argument that the public's perception of fairness and legitimacy in law enforcement systems fosters greater compliance with the law and cooperation with correctional officers. The trust observed in this study is also consistent with the findings of Felix et al. (2023), who identified a similar level of trust in correctional officers among Taiwanese inmates.

Table 2.2 Respondents' Level of Satisfaction on the Respect for BJMP

Indicators	Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL)		Family of PDL		Service Providers		Total	
	Mean	VI	Mean	VI	Mean	VI	Mean	VI
1. I made sure that I talk in a proper and calm manner when talking to	5.89	Very High	5.89	Very High	5.89	Very High	5.89	Very High
								Rank 1

Indicators	Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL)		Family of PDL		Service Providers		Total	
	Mean	VI	Mean	VI	Mean	VI	Mean	VI
BJMP personnel with regards to their rules.								
2. I freely follow the rules of BJMP because I respect their institution.	5.84	Very High	5.85	Very High	5.94	Very High	5.85	Very High Rank 2
3. I highly regard and respect all BJMP personnel regardless of their sex, age, belief/religion or ethnicity.	5.86	Very High	5.78	Very High	5.94	Very High	5.84	Very High Rank 3
4. Negative news/information about the personnel of BJMP will never change the respect and support I have in their organization	5.87	Very High	5.75	Very High	5.72	Very High	5.83	Very High Rank 4
5. BJMP personnel conduct themselves the character of a true public servant.	5.82	Very High	5.82	Very High	5.82	Very High	5.82	Very High Rank 5

The responses presented in Table 2.2 indicate a "Very High" level of respect for BJMP personnel across all respondent groups, with mean scores ranging from 5.72 to 5.89. Notably, emphasized the importance of respectful communication and adherence to BJMP rules, reflecting a strong institutional culture of mutual respect.

These findings are consistent with research by Corrections 1 (2014), which suggests that respectful communication and behavior by cor-

rectional officers play a significant role in establishing positive relationships with inmates. Officers who show genuine concern for inmates' well-being and maintain consistent and honest behavior foster mutual respect, which contributes to the overall effectiveness of the correctional system. Consistent and honest behavior from jail officers during interactions with inmates fosters trust and respect, thereby promoting positive interpersonal relationships between both parties (Rizzo et al., 2021).

Table 2.3 Respondents' Level of Satisfaction with the Services of BJMP

Indicators	Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL)		Family of PDL		Service Providers		Total	
	Mean	VI	Mean	VI	Mean	VI	Mean	VI
1. Can we count on your support and cooperation in BJMP programs and activities?	5.91	Very High	5.90	Very High	6.00	Very High	5.91	Very High Rank 1
2. The programs and activities conducted	5.89	Very High	5.83	Very High	5.89	Very High	5.87	Very High

Indicators	Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL)		Family of PDL		Service Providers		Total	
	Mean	VI	Mean	VI	Mean	VI	Mean	VI
by the BJMP give a great impact to me and our community.								Rank 2
3. I am satisfied with the services/activities undertaken by the BJMP in our community.	5.89	Very High	5.78	Very High	5.83	Very High	5.86	Very High Rank 3
4. The methods used by the BJMP in providing services/conducting community support activities are effective.	5.87	Very High	5.79	Very High	5.83	Very High	5.85	Very High Rank 4
5. I am aware of the community support programs and activities being conducted by the BJMP.	5.85	Very High	5.79	Very High	5.89	Very High	5.84	Very High Rank 5

Table 2.3 shows the satisfaction levels with the services provided by BJMP, including community support programs. All groups—PDL, their families, and service providers—reported a "Very High" level of satisfaction, with mean scores ranging from 5.79 to 6.00. The highest rating (6.00) was given for the item, "Can we count on your support and cooperation in BJMP programs and activities?" This demonstrates the strong engagement and cooperation between BJMP and its stakeholders, which is essential for the success of community support programs and other BJMP initiatives.

These findings align with the 2022 Whole-of-Government Citizen Satisfaction (CitSat) Survey, conducted by the Development Academy of the Philippines through its Productivity and Development Center" (DAP-PDC, 2023), which reported a high government-to-citizen satisfaction score of 96.96%. BJMP's community engagement efforts are evidently well-received, and the respondents' satisfaction with BJMP's services reflects the agency's ongoing commitment to fostering positive relationships with the public.

Table 2.4 Satisfaction Levels among all Groups of Respondents

Indicator	PDL (Mean, Rank)	Family (Mean, Rank)	Service Provider (Mean, Rank)
BJMP Services	5.90 (1)	5.82 (2)	5.89 (1)
Respect for BJMP	5.86 (2)	5.82 (2)	5.86 (2)
Trust in BJMP	5.83 (3)	5.83 (1)	5.71 (3)
Overall Satisfaction	5.86	5.82	5.71

Tables 2.4 present satisfaction levels among PDL, their families, and service providers, respectively. These groups all report very high levels of satisfaction with BJMP services, respect, and trust, with mean scores ranging

from 5.71 to 5.91 across the indicators. PDLs expressed the highest satisfaction with BJMP services (mean of 5.90), followed by respect for BJMP personnel (mean of 5.86), and trust in BJMP (mean of 5.83). Similarly, the family

members of PDL also reported very high levels of satisfaction, particularly with respect to trust (mean of 5.83) and services (mean of 5.82). Service providers ranked BJMP services the highest (mean of 5.89), followed by respect for BJMP personnel (mean of 5.86) and trust (mean of 5.71).

These findings are consistent with literature highlighting the importance of maintaining strong relationships between correctional institutions and their stakeholders, including

PDLs, families, and service providers. For instance, visitation is a key factor in maintaining mental well-being among inmates (Booth, 2020), and the respect shown by correctional officers toward inmates and their families is a crucial aspect of the rehabilitation process (Kinsella & Woodall, 2017). The high satisfaction levels reported in this study suggest that BJMP has been successful in building and maintaining these relationships.

Table 2.7 Overall Satisfaction of Respondents

Mean	Verbal Description	Verbal Interpretation
5.85	Very High	The respondents have a very high level of satisfaction on the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP).

Table 2.7 presents the overall level of satisfaction among all respondents, yielding a mean score of 5.85, which corresponds to a "Very High" verbal description. This indicates that, collectively, respondents—including persons deprived of liberty (PDL), their families, and service providers—expressed strong approval and appreciation for the services, respect, and trust extended by the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology.

This finding aligns with previous research by Samillo et al. (2020) and Bondad (2020),

which emphasized not only the strengths of BJMP service delivery but also recognized ongoing challenges such as overcrowding, limited resources, and staff constraints. Despite these obstacles, the consistently high satisfaction scores across stakeholder groups reflect BJMP's efforts to deliver humane and rehabilitative correctional services. The results highlight the value placed on transparency, professionalism, and stakeholder engagement within the jail management system.

Table 3. Significant Difference between the Level of Satisfaction among PDL, Family of PDL, and Service Providers

Variables	<i>F</i>	<i>F crit</i>	<i>p-value</i>	Decision on <i>H</i> ₀
Level of Satisfaction among PDL, Family Members, Service Providers	0.87	3.03	0.42	Fail to Reject

Finally, Table 3 presents the results of a One-Way ANOVA analysis, which shows no significant difference in satisfaction levels between PDLs, their families, and service providers (*p*-value = 0.42). This indicates that BJMP's services are perceived equally well by all groups, suggesting that the agency's efforts in improving services, fostering trust, and promoting respect have been effective across all stakeholders.

Conclusion

The findings of this study provide strong evidence of high levels of satisfaction, trust, and respect for BJMP-ZCJ among all respondent groups including persons deprived of liberty (PDLs), their families, and service providers. The results highlight the successful implementation of BJMP's rehabilitation programs and services, which have earned the trust and cooperation of PDLs, their families, and service providers. These findings are consistent with existing literature, emphasizing the importance of

trust, respect, and community engagement in fostering effective correctional systems. Further improvements in resource allocation and program execution, however, may enhance the overall effectiveness of BJMP's services and ensure that the needs of all stakeholders are met.

The data also revealed no statistically significant differences in satisfaction levels among the different stakeholder groups, suggesting that the BJMP-ZCJ has achieved a consistent and equitable delivery of services. This finding highlights the Bureau's ability to maintain a high standard of service that meets the expectations of all stakeholders, regardless of their relationship to the jail system. The data indicates that the BJMP is highly regarded by its service users and demonstrates successful implementation of its programs, fostering an environment of trust and cooperation.

These outcomes are consistent with prior studies that underscore the importance of trust, respect, and stakeholder engagement in promoting the effectiveness of correctional institutions (Samillo et al., 2020; Bondad, 2020). These positive perceptions serve as a testament to the Bureau's successful implementation of policies and programs designed to improve the welfare of its clients and maintain a high standard of justice and rehabilitation.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn from the survey findings, the following recommendations are proposed to further enhance the BJMP's trust index and improve the quality of its services:

1. **Institutionalize Trust Rating Index:** Conduct the TRI on an annual basis to systematically assess client satisfaction, track the Bureau's credibility and institutional performance, and promote transparency, accountability, and evidence-based governance.
2. **Strengthen BJMP Branding and Communication Strategies:** Develop and implement a comprehensive communication plan to improve public perception and awareness of BJMP's programs and services. Clear, consistent, and transparent messaging will enhance stakeholder engagement and trust.

3. **Continuous professional development:** Provide ongoing training for BJMP personnel focused on work ethics, code of conduct, and customer relations. This will ensure staff professionalism, improve interpersonal interactions, and reinforce the Bureau's rehabilitative goals.
4. **Promote Research Collaboration and Comparative Studies:** Partner with academic institutions and research organizations to conduct longitudinal studies examining the long-term impacts of rehabilitation programs. Additionally, carry out comparative studies across other BJMP facilities or correctional institutions to identify best practices and contextual challenges, facilitating a nationwide improvement in correctional management.
5. **Policy Implications and Strategic Resource Allocation:** The consistently high levels of trust and satisfaction recorded in this study affirm BJMP-ZCJ's operational effectiveness. Policymakers should continue to invest in personnel development, infrastructure upgrades, and the expansion of rehabilitative services. Sustainable resource allocation is crucial to maintaining and enhancing institutional performance and public trust.

By implementing these recommendations, BJMP-ZCJ can continue to improve its services, enhance its public image, and foster greater trust and satisfaction among all clientele.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed to the completion of this thesis. Their guidance, support, and encouragement have been truly invaluable throughout my academic journey;

First, praises and thanks to **Almighty God** for bestowing his blessings throughout my research work and completing this research successfully;

To De La Salle University-Dasmariñas for giving me this learning opportunity, which has allowed me to develop essential life lessons in patience, perseverance, resilience, and the continuous pursuit of knowledge;

I am deeply grateful to **Dr. Elizabeth Buena-Villa**, my thesis adviser, for your unwavering support, valuable feedback, and guidance throughout this research. I could not have undertaken this journey without your expertise and dedication, which have been instrumental in shaping the direction and quality of this work;

Dr. Alrien Francisco Dausan, former Dean of the College of Criminal Justice Education of De La Salle University-Dasmariñas for the guidance and support throughout the process of writing this research, helping make it possible;

Dr. Rodel G Esmilla, Dean of the College of Criminal Justice Education of De La Salle University-Dasmariñas and College of Criminal Justice Education Graduate staff for their support and assistance;

To the members of the **Panel of Defense** led by Dr. Teresita D. Pareja who generously provided knowledge and expertise that greatly contributed to the improvement of my thesis;

Jail Chief Superintendent Johnson Macamay Calub, DM, CESE, and **Jail Superintendent Xavier Awican Solda, CESE** for the support, guidance, and for allowing me to carry out this research study;

To **J01 Mary Grace R Suarez**, Regional Psychologist of BJMP Regional Office-XI thank you for the technical support and assistance in my research study;

To my **classmates, friends, and fellow BJMP officers** of Zamboanga City Jail for the camaraderie, moral support, and thought-provoking discussions. I deeply appreciate your presence in making this research journey made more enjoyable and fulfilling; and

On a personal note, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my family Tatay Zaldy, Nanay Ellen, Anang Bonsai, and Biboy whose unwavering love and encouragement have been my constant source of strength. To my husband, Jay Rim and my daughter Gabbi, thank you for your endless support and belief in me. Your patience, understanding, and love have been my anchor during the challenging times of this journey.

This research study would not have been possible without the collective effort and support of all these individuals. Thank you all. To God be the Glory!

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