

The Influence of Military Discipline Practices on the Interpersonal Relationships of Criminology Students: A Case Study of CCJE

Grace H. Lupao¹

College of Criminal Justice Education, Isabela State University

Rubelyn P. Castillo

College of Criminal Justice Education, Isabela State University

Grace Ann V. Mabao

College of Criminal Justice Education, Isabela State University

Samuel M. Ucol, Jr.

College of Criminal Justice Education, Isabela State University

ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of military discipline practices on the interpersonal relationships of criminology students at the College of Criminal Justice Education (CCJE). Using personal interviews and a focused group discussion approach, it explores the types of military discipline enforced, the degree to which students integrate these practices into their daily lives, and the consequent effects on their interactions with family and friends. Findings suggest that students adopt various military discipline practices – such as maintaining proper appearance, respecting the chain of command, and observing military courtesy – which contribute to the development of qualities like punctuality, obedience, and self-regulation. These internalized behaviors appear to positively influence students' social skills, fostering trust, communication, and cooperation within their personal relationships. The study concludes that military discipline significantly contributes to the personal development and social functioning of criminology students. Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of addressing potential issues related to blind obedience in the implementation of military discipline within educational settings. Recommendations for mitigating such concerns, as well as suggestions for future research, are also provided.

Keywords: military discipline practices, interpersonal relationships, communication styles, military courtesy in criminology

I. INTRODUCTION

Discipline is a cornerstone of effective education, fostering an environment where teaching and learning can thrive. It serves the dual purpose of establishing a safe, orderly, and positive learning atmosphere while simultaneously cultivating self-discipline among students. Cultivating self-discipline through evidence-based strategies is essential not

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¹Corresponding Author: grace.lupao@isu.edu.ph

only for promoting constructive interpersonal relationships but also for enhancing the overall school climate, improving academic outcomes, and supporting the emotional well-being of learners (Bear, 2010). School disciplinary approaches have evolved to address a wide range of behavioral issues and can be broadly classified as preventive, supportive, corrective, punitive, and restorative (Yüksel, 2023). While many schools report utilizing progressive discipline, punitive measures like suspension and police involvement remain prevalent, with fewer institutions employing supportive responses such as counseling (Magier et al., 2021).

Within the specific context of criminology education, higher institutions, such as the College of Criminal Justice Education (CCJE) in Cauayan City, intentionally integrate militaristic disciplinary measures as a core pedagogical approach. These practices are designed to cultivate the unique behaviors and discipline required for future professionals in uniformed services, directly aligning with the demands of their challenging careers. This strategy, rooted in principles of applied criminology and organizational behavior within uniformed services, aims to train students to develop behaviors and discipline aligned with their demanding future careers. This approach directly supports the vision of producing competent and morally upright graduates capable of delivering effective services within the criminal justice system and other related professions (CMO 5, Series of 2018; Sec. 5, of RA 11131).

To fully grasp the nature of these disciplinary practices, it's crucial to understand the definition of military discipline itself. As defined by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Regulations G 131-013, military discipline is “a state of order and obedience existing within a command that involves the ready subordination of the will of the individual for the good of the group” (AFP, 1987). It emphasizes habitual but reasoned obedience that preserves initiative, cultivated through training, judicious use of punishment and reward, and instilling confidence and responsibility. Therefore, the disciplinary practices observed in the CCJE are not merely about control, but about fostering a deep-seated commitment to order, shared objectives, and a high degree of personal and collective responsibility, mirroring the ethos essential for successful careers in law enforcement, corrections, and other public safety roles.

Research on disciplinary measures offers varied insights. Positive discipline in schools generally promotes student well-being and academic success, especially among younger learners. Conversely, traditional methods like corporal punishment, despite their perceived deterrent effect, can cause harm and remain controversial (Elkadi & Sharaf, 2023; Indrawati et al., 2021; Matthew, 2024). While reward systems generally enhance learning outcomes, physical and inconvenient punishments tend to negatively affect discipline and learning. Military discipline itself has a complex and often contrasting impact on interpersonal relationships and institutional culture. Some criminologists argue that it produces overly obedient, controlled individuals aligned with punitive prison cultures. However, military scholars challenge this, emphasizing that military drill fosters collective strength, empathy, and professional support rather than mere coercion. For instance, Moran and Turner (2022) found that ex-military prison staff often demonstrate compassionate, professional approaches and emotional

understanding, countering the stereotype of militarism as purely authoritarian. Yet, military discipline can also have negative societal effects by reinforcing social divisions, suppressing personal autonomy, and undermining democratic processes (Easy Sociology, 2024). Interestingly, the “Battle Buddy” tradition in the military, initially thought to increase PTSD risk, has been found to enhance partner intimacy and provide essential emotional support (Kraft, 2016).

While ample research confirms that schools employ varied disciplinary measures with contrasting psycho-social impacts, and despite the recognized importance of discipline in shaping future professionals, particularly in the demanding field of criminal justice, the specific influence of these unique militaristic discipline practices on students' personal and social lives remains an area warranting deeper investigation. This study is positioned within the field of applied criminology, exploring how disciplinary practices often associated with uniformed services are employed in the context of criminal justice education. While drawing insights from educational psychology to understand the mechanisms of student development and behavior – specifically behavioral conditioning (Skinner, 1930), social influence (Kelman, 1958), and self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 1985) – our primary focus is on the practical implications of such discipline for future criminal justice professionals and their interpersonal interactions.

In the specific context of Criminology education at Isabela State University's CCJE, military discipline practices, including strict adherence to hierarchy, dress codes, physical training, and a system of rewards and punishments (Bronson, 1894), are imposed to cultivate resilience, leadership, and a strong work ethic among students. These qualities instill responsibility, respect for authority, and self-control, which are essential not only for academic success but also for fostering positive interpersonal relationships. Interpersonal relationships – connections formed through social interactions with family, friends, and peers – are profoundly influenced by various factors, including discipline. Effective communication, respect, and accountability, often promoted through military discipline, contribute to building trust and harmonious relationships. Developing strong interpersonal skills is vital for criminology students as they prepare to work collaboratively in demanding professional environments (Heyrosa & Culanag, 2025). Within the military, interpersonal relationships are also expressed through military courtesy, defined as the politeness, civility, and respect personnel accord one another, which helps smooth personal relationships within the profession.

This study aims to explore the military discipline practices imposed by CCJE, how students adopt these practices in their daily lives, and the impact these practices have on their interpersonal relationships with family and friends. Specifically, it focuses on identifying the effects of military discipline on the interpersonal relationships of 3rd and 4th year students at ISU Cauayan. In line with this, the study seeks to determine the military discipline practices imposed on students by CCJE, examine the ways in which students apply these practices in their daily lives, and analyze how these practices influence their relationships with both family and friends.

II. METHODS

A. Research Design

This study employed qualitative descriptive research to explore the militaristic discipline practiced among College of Criminal Justice Education students of Isabela State University-Cauayan City Campus through an open-ended semi-structured interview guide, validated by an English expert and panelists, to allow flexibility and easy comparison of patterns of responses from the interview participants.

B. Participants of the Study

This study engaged eight participants, evenly distributed by gender, with four males and four females, and balanced across academic levels, comprising four students from the fourth year and four from the third year. Participants were purposively selected according to strict inclusion criteria to ensure the relevance and quality of data. These criteria included: (a) current enrollment as a student in the College of Criminal Justice Education (CCJE), (b) non-transfer status to maintain institutional consistency, and (c) regular enrollment in the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) program. Such criteria were deliberately chosen to secure participants with sustained exposure to the military discipline practiced within CCJE, thereby enhancing the likelihood of obtaining comparable and reliable insights reflective of their shared experiences in this setting.

C. Data Gathering Procedure

Before starting the study, the researchers obtained formal permission from the Office of the Dean and secured informed consent from CCJE students. Participants received consent letters before data collection. Semi-structured interviews were scheduled at the participants' convenience. Before each interview, the researcher explained the study's objectives and ethical considerations. Interviews used probing questions to deeply explore participants' experiences, were audio-recorded with consent, and later transcribed.

D. Ethical Considerations

Participation in this study was entirely voluntary, and all student respondents were informed that they could discontinue their participation at any point without any penalty or negative consequences. To protect their privacy and confidentiality, all responses and identifying information were kept strictly confidential. Data collected were accessible only to the researcher and were securely stored to prevent unauthorized access. No information was shared with third parties without explicit permission from the participants. Additionally, all research materials and data will be securely disposed of two years following the conclusion of the study, in accordance with ethical standards for data management and participant privacy protection.

E. Data Analysis

Data gathered in this study through interview guide questions were analyzed using thematic analysis following the six steps by Braun and Clarke (2006) as: 1)

familiarization, 2) generating initial codes, 3) searching for themes, 4) reviewing themes, 5) defining and naming themes, 6) producing the report.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Military Discipline Practices in the College of Criminal Justice Education

Analysis of this study revealed six fundamental military discipline practices enforced by the College of Criminal Justice Education (CCJE), underscoring the institution's systematic and structured approach to student development. These findings were derived from participants' responses to the guiding questions: 'What military discipline practices are you aware of that are imposed by the CCJE?' and 'Can you provide examples of these military practices observed within the CCJE?' This approach allowed for a comprehensive understanding of how military discipline is integrated into the college's educational framework.

1. Proper conduct and appearance.

CCJE places significant emphasis on proper conduct and appearance, particularly through strict regulations concerning haircuts for male students and adherence to prescribed uniforms. This emphasis is further reinforced by encouraging participation in ROTC from freshman year. As Participants 1 and 7 noted, "So we should have a proper haircut, then the proper uniform, and also, we undergo ROTC, right?"

Participant 5 also elaborated on the haircut policy:

Well, of course po, 'yong una, is the haircut policy na we follow that haircut policy base on the level of the curriculum na meron po tayo. Like for example, sa first year they have the Zero(0) Dos(2) policy and the second year iba-iba – paiba-iba siya [based] upon the curriculum level. (Translation: Well, of course, the first one is the haircut policy. We follow that policy based on the curriculum level we have. For example, in the first year, they have the Zero (0) Dos (2) policy, and in the second year, it changes depending on the curriculum level.)

The emphasis on proper appearance and grooming, as well as strict adherence to uniform policies at CCJE, implies a deliberate effort to foster unity, equality, and a clear transition from civilian to disciplined cadet life. By adopting the standardized haircut policy used by prestigious institutions like the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA) and the Philippine Military Academy (PMA), CCJE reinforces a shared identity among first-year students and aligns its disciplinary culture with established military traditions, which likely strengthens group cohesion and professional socialization.

Additionally, uniforms are prescribed basically for protection, functionality, and to symbolize status: enlisted between commissioned officers, the rank, unit classification, and merit awards. It also creates a shared sense of identity (Kikkert, 2025; Raff Military Textile, 2025). It is a policy that personnel must exhibit a professional demeanor (no use of phone, hands must be out of the pocket, no smoking) while in uniform.

2. *Respect for the chain of command.*

Criminology students are systematically trained to show respect for the chain of command among faculty and superiors, with time discipline emerging as a distinct and foundational theme in their professional development. This highlights how strict adherence to schedules and punctuality functions not only as a practical skill but also as a symbolic demonstration of discipline within the college. For instance, Participant 2 emphasized: *“One of the things na tinuturo sa ‘tin dito sa CCJE kase ‘yong pagiging punctual, ‘yong pagset ng early call time – ‘yong mga gano’n – ‘yong pagiging disiplinado natin sa pamamagitan ng pag-set ng mga rules gano’n.”* (Translation: One of the things taught to us here at CCJE is being punctual, setting an early call time, and being disciplined by establishing rules like that.). Similarly, Participant 3 explicitly linked punctuality to the broader military discipline framework imposed: *“... Military discipline imposed by the CCJE department, so this includes sidesteps, punctuality.”*

CCJE prepares the student with the demand of punctuality in the criminal justice profession, where discipline and reliability are critical for mission success and public trust. This further allows students to internalize the value of accountability, respect for authority, and readiness, which are vital in law enforcement. Students’ punctuality significantly enhances their academic performance by enabling consistent attendance and preventing the loss of critical lecture content and discussions.

In the military, punctuality is a discipline that ensures trust and readiness in life-and-death crucial in the success of a mission. Further, according to Col. Rustico V. Villanueva, GSC (INF) PA (as cited in Reserved Command, Philippine Army, 2025), *“timeliness and truthfulness are the most essential elements of Strategic Communication.”*

3. *Military courtesy.*

CCJE students are observed to show military courtesy to senior students and superior officers, particularly during their On-the-Job class, by practices such as greeting and executing sidestepping. These acts demonstrate how respect and deference are institutionalized to mirror military and law enforcement hierarchies. Participant 7 articulated this directly: *“First po, si ano respecting the seniors mga mas nakatataas”* (Translation: First, respecting the seniors and those in higher positions). Participant 5 also described specific courtesy practices: *“Next, of course, ‘yong military manner na tinatawag – the sidestep, and of course, ‘yong pag-greet ng mga seniors and sa... faculty members.”* (Translation: Next, of course, is the so-called military manner, such as the sidestep and greeting seniors and faculty members.)

The highest form of military courtesy is the execution of a salute. However, the sidestep – stepping laterally with measured, controlled movements – to maintain proper military decorum and show deference is another expression of military courtesy. This maneuver allows the soldier to avoid directly passing in front of the superior, which is considered disrespectful, while preserving discipline and order. Seniors or superiors in the organizations are greeted – a manifestation of respect for the personnel’s position and experience.

At CCJE, students enrolled in On-the-Job Training (OJT) are regarded as seniors or superiors by first- through third-year students. Following military tradition, these OJT students are entitled to receive courtesies that honor their achievement in completing all academic requirements and courses before their OJT enrollment. While respect for elders is deeply ingrained in Filipino culture and typically learned within the family, this cultural value is further reinforced within the college through the institution's military discipline framework, which emphasizes respect for higher-year students.

4. Physical corrective training.

CCJE students undergo physical exercises because of disciplinary infractions, such as tardiness or non-compliance with haircut regulations. This suggests that these physical consequences serve not only as punishment but also as corrective training that enhances physical readiness and reinforces departmental authority. Participant 6 emphasized this enforcement mechanism. For example, one participant explained: "It's more about physical punishment. If someone doesn't get a haircut, they'll have them write a paper promising to comply next time, followed by push-ups, which are simple, basic exercises." Participant 1 added, "*Ang magiging consequences niyan ay mga physical activity or physical exercises like push-ups, pull-ups, at iba pa*" (Translation: The consequences will be physical activities or exercises like push-ups, pull-ups, and others). Similarly, Participant 7 noted: "*Yong punishment din po 'yong a push-up tapos kapag late 'yong punishment push-up, sit-up*" (Translation: Punishments like push-ups. When we're late, the punishment is push-ups or sit-ups).

Imposing physical exercises are intentionally used to encourage mental presence and alertness, not to humiliate a soldier. The Colorado Army Command has regulated this approach as an authority to correct minor acts of indiscipline with brief forms of exercise, such as 10 pushups for a soldier who arrives late to formation (Roeder, 2020). Thus, excessive and long performance of physical exercise defeats the purpose but is a violation of military discipline.

The implementation of physical exercises as disciplinary measures within CCJE serves a dual function: it operates as a corrective mechanism to address infractions such as tardiness and non-compliance with grooming standards while simultaneously enhancing the physical readiness essential for law enforcement professionals. This practice reflects core military principles where discipline is maintained through measured, purposeful enforcement that reinforces the chain of command and institutional authority. By employing brief, targeted physical activities, such as push-ups or sit-ups, CCJE aligns with established military protocols that prioritize maintaining mental alertness and operational effectiveness without resorting to excessive or punitive measures. Consequently, this approach cultivates a disciplined mindset and physical conditioning critical to the professional development of cadets, ensuring preparedness for the rigorous demands of their future roles.

5. Battle buddy system and secrecy discipline.

A key military practice adopted in the college, as specified by respondents, is the battle buddy system and secrecy discipline. This is why CCJE students commonly address batchmates as “buddy” and are reminded to maintain confidentiality with the phrase “What you see, what you hear when you leave, leave it here.” Participants identified practices related to secrecy and collective accountability. One participant specifically mentioned “military secrecy.” Participant 1 shared, “*So example ‘yong military secrecy diba pagdating sa pamilya family problem, mas nagiging open sila sa akin kapag may mga problema sila natutulungan ko silang i-surpass yung mga problems*” (Translation: For example, with military secrecy, when it comes to family problems, they become more open to me. When they have problems, I am able to help them overcome those.) Supporting the battle buddy, Participant 5 stated: “*sa friends naman po siyempre ‘yong buddy system ‘yong ganun po saka ‘yong military secrecy na tinataw po siyempre eh hindi mo dapat ini-spill ‘yong mga kaibigan mo sa mga gantong bagay*” (Translation: With friends, of course, there is the buddy system, and also the military secrecy that is imposed. Naturally, you should not spill your friends’ secrets in such matters.).

A battle buddy is a military partner who provides mutual support and companionship during training and combat. Secrecy discipline is the ability not to reveal confidential information to an unauthorized person. Hence, CCJE students have the practice of moving in pairs and are trained not to reveal information that may harm an individual, the institution, or even the government.

The adoption of the battle buddy system and secrecy discipline at CCJE implies a strong emphasis on fostering trust, mutual support, and collective accountability among students, which are essential components of military culture. By encouraging students to address each other as “buddy” and to uphold confidentiality with strict secrecy rules, the college cultivates an environment where personal challenges can be shared safely, and assistance can be effectively provided. This practice not only strengthens interpersonal bonds and camaraderie but also reinforces discipline and loyalty, preparing students for the collaborative and confidential nature of law enforcement work. Ultimately, these military-inspired practices enhance both the social cohesion and ethical responsibility vital to professional development in criminology.

6. Merit and demerit system or reward and punishment.

The CCJE’s merit and demerit system is directly adopted from the grading system of the ROTC Program under the Philippine Army. This theme explores how positive reinforcement complements corrective measures within a comprehensive behavioral management approach that acknowledges both infractions and achievements. As Participant 3 mentioned “*tapos.. ‘yong reward and punishment that became part of life of criminology students.*” This was reinforced by Participant 2 stating “*meron kase tayong, merit-demerit system na in exchange sa mga initiatives na ginagawa mo parang may reward*” (Translation: We have a merit-demerit system where the initiatives you do are exchanged as if there is a reward.).

This system appears to be implemented particularly for OJT students, impacting their required field hours (540 hours from OJT 1 & 2 as prescribed in CMO 5, Series of

2018). Recent literature supports the integration of positive reinforcement strategies alongside punitive measures; Cameron et al. (2005) suggest that tying rewards to achievable, challenging performance standards can enhance motivation and performance.

The CCJE's adoption of the ROTC-based merit and demerit system implies a balanced behavioral management approach that integrates both positive reinforcement and corrective measures. This system not only motivates students by rewarding their initiatives but also holds them accountable for infractions, thereby promoting discipline and enhancing performance, especially during their On-the-Job Training.

B. Adopted Military Discipline Practices by Students in Their Daily Lives

Data suggest that military discipline significantly shapes the behavior and attitudes of CCJE students, as reflected in the key themes identified from the gathered information. These themes are elicited from the participants' responses to the guide question on how they adopted military discipline in their daily lives.

1. Punctuality.

Punctuality is identified as a vital habit, reflecting respect for others, promoting organization, and ensuring students do not miss important opportunities for learning and growth. Being on time not only enhances academic performance but also often leads to positive feedback from instructors. The importance of punctuality extends beyond school grounds, as highlighted by one participant:

According to Participant 3, "*Yong pagiging punctual, iyon talaga yung pinaka parang na naadopt mo every day.*" (Translation: Being punctual is really the main thing you tend to adopt every day.), suggesting it becomes ingrained like a military routine. Participant 4 corroborated this, stating, "*yong punctuality sa time kung anong oras ka pupunta na adopt din iyon outside dito sa department or outside dito sa school like sa family gatherings gano'n*" (Translation: Punctuality in terms of the time you arrive is also adopted outside the department or school, such as in family gatherings.).

The participants' statements highlight a growing appreciation among students for the value of punctuality, recognizing that being on time is essential not only within academic and professional contexts but also in everyday life as a demonstration of respect for others' time. This behavioral development can be understood through the lens of Temporal Motivation Theory (TMT), which posits that an individual's motivation to perform a task is influenced by the anticipated rewards, potential consequences, and the perceived cost of delay. Within the CCJE context, the implementation of physical corrective training alongside a merit and demerit system creates a structured environment where students are motivated to adhere to punctuality standards. Specifically, students are incentivized to comply with faculty instructions promptly to avoid demerits—which may negatively impact their academic evaluations—and to prevent physical exercises as punitive consequences. Thus, TMT provides a useful framework for understanding how the interplay of rewards and penalties effectively shapes punctual behavior among criminology students.

2. Obedience.

The participants' responses felt improvement in their character, to constantly behave according to rules and regulations, and the recognition that discipline is a must for CCJE students. Participant 5 clearly stated, "*Iyong pagiging disiplinado 'yon po 'yong hindi po talaga dapat matanggal as a part of the CCJE family kase the discipline itself ang nag-govern sa atin para sumunod at nang sumunod lang sa lahat ng patakaran po na pinapatupad sa CCJE*" (Translation: Discipline is something that should never be removed as part of the CCJE family, because discipline itself governs us to follow – and to keep on following – all the rules implemented in CCJE.).

While obedience generally promotes teamwork and order, the emphasis on "just follow and follow all the rules implemented" in CCJE reflects a potential downside of military discipline, especially when its enforcement becomes overly rigorous or autocratic. It may also develop uncritical and automatic submission to authority, often disregarding ethical or legal considerations, commonly called blind obedience. The students might not have the freedom to express ideas and exercise creativity when the leadership is autocratic, just like in leadership styles in police departments (Modise, 2024).

To explore whether blind obedience exists within the CCJE, a focused group discussion was held to understand why participants choose to obey rules and whether blind obedience is a factor in the college. When asked about this, Participant 5 clarified, "*Hindi naman po sa ganon, kasi alam naming mabuti din sa amin yun,*" (Translation: It's not like that, because we know it's also good for us.), referring to their adherence to the military-style discipline practiced in the college.

When the conversation shifted to issues involving moral, legal, and ethical violations, participants were asked if they had ever been instructed to comply with something that went against these principles. Participant 2 simply answered, "*Wala po,*" which translates to "There has never been such an instruction." Finally, the group was asked if there had ever been a time they chose not to obey rules or comply with an order. Participant 1 responded, "*Kung minsan, gaya ng namatayan kami*" (Translation: There were instances...like when a member of our family passed away), While Participant 8 said "*hindi naman sa ayaw sumunod, kaya lng kung minsan kasi iba-iba ang instruction ang mga faculty, ayaw na naming gawin baka may pagbabago na naman*" (Translation: It's not that we don't want to obey, but sometimes the faculty give different instructions, and we hesitate to do it because there might be another change again.). On the topic of disagreements regarding compliance, Participant 1 added, "*Kung meron kami gagawin at hindi kami magkakasundo, nagmi-meeting kami. Saka alam naman naming na majority wins,*" (Translation: If we have tasks to do and we can't reach an agreement, we hold a meeting, and of course, we know that the majority wins.).

Discipline at CCJE functions as a foundational value that promotes order and personal development, balanced by participants' awareness and occasional exercise of autonomy. Although the system leans toward military-style rigor, students generally perceive their obedience as reasoned and justified rather than blind or authoritarian, with

space allowed for exceptions and group consensus in resolving conflicts. The implementation of military discipline within educational institutions must be rigorous; however, it is essential to integrate humane consideration of individual circumstances and maintain a clear unity of command to prevent confusion among students.

3. Self-discipline through structured routines and respect for hierarchy.

Military discipline is highly capable of cultivating self-discipline through structured routines and an ingrained respect for hierarchy. Participants reported changes like waking up early, avoiding immediate phone use, performing cleaning duties promptly, and showing respect to elders.

As Participant 4 articulated:

Unlike no'ng dati, nagkaroon akong disciplina sa sarili ko o sa personal development. Like for example, sa umaga ah paggising maaga hindi na selpon agad yung hinaharap. Naglilinis na agad gano'n tapos kapag tapos sa mga ano matatanda, nagbibigay na nang galang hindi na gaya ng dati. (Translation: Unlike before, I developed self-discipline and personal growth. For example, in the morning, when I wake up early, I no longer go straight to my phone. Instead, I clean right away, and afterward, I show respect to elders, unlike before.)

The respect CCJE students develop for elders in civilian life finds a direct parallel in their regard for seniors and the chain of command within the military structure. This process aligns with Kelman's Social Influence Theory (1958), which posits three stages of influence. Initially, students may exhibit compliance, motivated by the pursuit of rewards or avoidance of punishment. Over time, they may move to identification, seeking to emulate or align with respected authority figures. Ultimately, the consistent application of militaristic discipline can lead to internalization, where military values are genuinely adopted as personal beliefs, resulting in authentic obedience and durable behavioral change. Kelman's framework thus illuminates how legitimate authority and social influence are critical in shaping the disciplined conduct observed in military-style training environments.

4. Physical exercises as self-regulation.

As revealed in the previous findings, the common type of corrective punishment in CCJE is physical exercises, such as jumping jacks, pumping, push-ups, and the like are implemented when the student is late, not in a proper haircut during inspection, and when a student is not listening attentively to the discussion of the instructions. Though simple and seemingly basic, it helps students regulate their behavior and view it as part of the personal development process and good for health and wellness, not a punishment.

Participant 6's statement exemplifies this:

Military discipline plays a big role in shaping or enhancing my academic performance, like 'pag inaatok ako sa klase is mag-e-exercise kasi so I need to be more productive or makinig sa klase kapag 'yon...basic lang 'yon hindi siya punishment kung hindi disciplinary action na pwede mo

i-adopt to build health and wellness of an individual.” (Translation: Military discipline plays a big role in shaping or enhancing my academic performance. For example, when I feel sleepy in class, I do some exercise so I can be more productive or listen attentively. Those are just basic exercises, not punishment, but a disciplinary action that can be adopted to build an individual’s health and wellness.).

CCJE students’ regular engagement in various physical exercises has become an integrated aspect of their school life. They have learned to utilize these activities constructively and have recognized their benefits for both their physical health and academic performance, thus no longer perceiving them as punitive. This demonstrates that when students comprehend the purpose and rationale behind instructions, tasks, or policies, their compliance and adherence are significantly facilitated.

This appreciation of military discipline practices adheres to Pardia (2021) when he states that physical exercises improved student memory and increased concentration becomes relevant. In the context of students, incorporating physical exercises into daily routines can be an effective strategy to combat the sedentary lifestyle that often accompanies modern education, where long hours of sitting and intense mental tasks may impair brain function.

5. Behavioral conditioning through the merit and demerit system.

The CCJE department enforces a system of rewards (merit) and punishments (demerits) designed to maintain discipline, encourage positive behavior, and deter misconduct. Rewards are granted to individuals who consistently adhere to the standards of conduct and contribute positively to the community, while punishments are imposed for violations of established rules and regulations, aiming to correct behavior and uphold justice. This balanced approach seeks to foster accountability, integrity, and fairness within the department. Consequently, students integrated this practice into their personal lives and goals by implementing self-reward systems, such as increasing focus on their studies and rewarding themselves with purchases following achievements.

Participant 8 stated:

So, ‘yong parang na-adopt ko na military discipline na in-impose ng CCJE is ‘yong reward and punishment. For example, if may na-accomplish akong task or pasado, bibili ako ng gusto kong bagay or mga foods. And if hindi ko naman na-meet ‘yong goal ko, I need ko pang tutukan or magsusunog pa ako ng kilay. (Translation: It’s like I have adopted the military discipline imposed by CCJE, which is the system of reward and punishment. For example, if I accomplish a task or pass, I buy something I want, like an item or food. But if I don’t meet my goal, I need to focus more and study harder.)

The practice of the merit and demerit system in the college influenced the behavior of the students in a way that student sets a goal, such as achieving a passing grade, and reward themselves when successful. If he fails, he decides to improve by focusing more, reflecting on a change in past study habits, and viewing this as the best technique to

earn a reward, such as buying food or a desired item. These steps align with the five stages of B.F. Skinner's Behavioral Conditioning Theory (1930).

The merit and demerit system functions as an external, goal-oriented stimulus that encourages students to cultivate determination and persistence in pursuing both academic success and personal aspirations. This system implicitly fosters the development of critical self-regulatory capacities, including the ability to delay gratification and to manage expectations adaptively in the face of objectives not immediately met. Psychologically, the structured feedback inherent in a merit-demerit system can reinforce long-term thinking over immediate impulses (delay of gratification), and by providing clear consequences for actions, it can also contribute to students' understanding of their agency in achieving desired outcomes. This understanding is crucial for developing resilience and coping mechanisms when initial attempts fall short, allowing them to recalibrate their efforts rather than succumb to discouragement.

6. Internalization of military discipline.

Internalization is the process by which external rules and norms are fully accepted and integrated into one's own value system, making adherence self-motivated rather than externally enforced. In the case of CCJE students, this process reached a point where military discipline became internalized. As Participant 4 described, *"for example, pupunta tayo sa dito gano'n so hindi na napipilit na pumunta, kusang loob na – like that.. tapos on time ka na pupunta hindi na kailangan pinipilit"* (Translation: For example, when we go somewhere, you are no longer forced to come but go willingly. Then you arrive on time without needing to be forced.).

Students have incorporated military discipline into their conduct and behavior, avoiding misdemeanors and rule infractions, gaining a deeper understanding of its relevance to their course, and developing a broader knowledge and better mindset toward disciplinary practices. Participant 5 highlighted this:

Do'n po sa behavior, eh para maiwasan ko na pong mag-commit ng infractions, 'yong mga misdemeanor things. And at the same time, sa mindset naman, mas gaganda, mas ma-bo-broaden sa pagtingin mo sa future profession, at mas rarami 'yong mga kaalaman mo kung bakit under training 'yong mga ganito. Mas ma-re-ready mo na rin pati 'yong physical aspect ng buhay po natin. (Translation: In terms of behavior, it helps me avoid committing infractions or misdemeanors. At the same time, it improves my mindset, broadens my outlook on my future profession, and increases my knowledge about why we undergo this kind of training. It also helps prepare the physical aspect of our lives.)

Responses give the impression that CCJE students foster military discipline in their daily lives, courtesy, and embody the character of future law enforcers and criminology graduates armed with integrity. Patel (2021) stated that behavior that apprehends morals and values is not only valuable in improving learner engagement, work performance, and health care quality but also influences the conditions within

society, in our daily interactions with others. This suggests that behavior rooted in morals and values plays a significant role in fostering the mental growth of students. When learners are consistently exposed to such.

C. Impact of Military Discipline Gained from CCJE on Interpersonal Relationships

Military discipline gained from the College of Criminal Justice Education (CCJE) can have profound effects on relationships with family and friends. The following are the emerging themes derived from the respondents:

1. Strengthened trust.

Students who exhibit military discipline in their conduct gain deeper trust from friends and family. As Participant 1 shared, *“naadopt ko ‘yong mas lumalaki ‘yong tiwala ng mga family and friends ko sa akin. So, mas nagiging open sila sa akin pagdating sa mga problema nila”* (Translation: I have adopted that, and my family and friends’ trust in me has grown, so they have become more open to me when it comes to their problems.).

In terms of interpersonal relationships, research suggests that a person (trustee) gains trust based on their perceived ability, their benevolence, and their integrity. (Mayer et al., 1995; Amogbokpa, 2010). People trust an individual based on his behavior and achievements, which gives him a high reputation (Kessler et al., 2017). Relating to military practices that contributed to the strengthening of trust are secrecy discipline, the battle buddy system, and respect for the chain of command. These practices require students to communicate, to work as teammates, and to be interdependent to achieve the common goal of attaining academic performance (Axelrod & Hamilton, 1981; Meyer, et al., 1995).

The military discipline cultivated at CCJE is instrumental in developing trustworthiness in students. This moral character trait is indispensable for their roles as future law enforcers, who, as dependable government servants, will routinely handle confidential information. Family and friends trust students who exhibit military discipline; exhibiting good physical appearance, punctuality, and self-discipline gains public trust.

2. Enhanced social interaction.

CCJE students develop increased maturity in interpersonal interactions, demonstrating careful consideration in their verbal expressions, exhibiting appropriate conduct, and maintaining mindfulness of their surrounding social environment, hence being tactful. Participant 5 articulated:

Dahil ‘yong military manner na po disiplina, mas napapaganda po ‘yong interaction ko sa family at the same time sa mga friends, relatives – sa lahat po ng nasa paligid ko kase mas maayos na po ‘yong pakikitungo ko. Hindi gaya nung dati na bara-bara lang gano’n ” (Translation: Because of the military manner of discipline, my interaction with my family, friends, relatives, and everyone around me has improved, since I now treat them better. Unlike before, when I interacted carelessly.)

Similarly, Participant 6 stated: “*mas marunong na akong maki-socialize, makitao at makibagay pagdating sa mga kaibigan, lalo na sa pamilya ko. Alam ko na kung ano ‘yong tamang gawin o gawain – paano ‘yong dapat kong i-akto, gano’n*” (Translation: I can socialize better now, be more understanding, and adapt when it comes to friends, especially with my family. I now know the right things to do and how I should act.).

The enhanced social interaction among CCJE students happens after internalizing military discipline, which Self-Determination Theory can explain the process; individuals internalize values and regulate their behavior. Internalization happens when clear reasons for rules are provided, acknowledge their feelings, and allow some degree of choice within the structured environment. Students are more likely to internalize discipline through integration; they would accept discipline as part of their values rather than merely following orders out of pressure or obligation (introjection). As a result, students develop genuine self-discipline and become more careful in their actions.

CCJE students must cultivate tact, a crucial skill for future law enforcement professionals who will consistently engage with the public. This involves choosing appropriate words, but also understanding the opportune moment to speak. Such discretion is particularly vital when dealing with hostile individuals, where a misstep in communication—even a poorly chosen word or ill-timed remark—could escalate tensions, provoke conflict, or incite confrontation. Therefore, mastering the correct choice of words and discerning when to speak are indispensable for effective and de-escalating public interactions.

3. Adaptability and emotional sensitivity.

The guiding principle known as 3M (*makisama, makibagay, makiramdam*) fosters camaraderie, cooperation, and empathy in the students' social interactions. By embodying these principles, the participant conveys that military discipline transcends the confines of formal training and influences their everyday interactions with friends and family. Participant 8 shared, “*So, naaaply ko ‘yong military discipline sa lives ko sa labas, especially to my friends and family, is Yung triple M, na makisama, makibagay, and makiramdam*” (Translation: I apply military discipline in my life outside, especially with my friends and family, through the triple M: to get along, to adapt, and to empathize.)

By applying *makisama*, one builds camaraderie and nurtures positive interactions. Through *makibagay*, adaptability shines as an essential tool for understanding and thriving in varying situations. Lastly, *makiramdam* highlights the importance of being attuned to the emotions and needs of others, strengthening personal connections. Together, these values showcase the transformative power of discipline in enhancing relationships and cultivating a deeper sense of community in daily living. Furthermore, Kraft (2016) found that the practice of battle buddy and obedience contributes to emotional sensitivity.

IV. CONCLUSION

The military discipline practices implemented in the CCJE have been effectively embraced by criminology students, positively influencing their physical, social, and

behavioral development. Through consistent adherence to maintaining proper appearance and conduct, respecting the chain of command, observing military courtesy, practicing the battle buddy system and secrecy discipline, and following the merit and demerit system, students have cultivated important qualities such as punctuality, obedience, and self-regulation. These practices have become internalized, shaping students into more disciplined and responsible individuals.

Furthermore, the embodiment of military discipline has fostered greater trust, confidence in social interactions, and improved communication, mutual respect, and cooperation among students. These outcomes have strengthened their interpersonal relationships, resulting in more harmonious and supportive social connections. Overall, military discipline not only contributes significantly to the personal growth of criminology students but also enhances their capacity to build and maintain healthy relationships within their families, peer groups, and broader communities.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the CCJE persist in implementing military discipline practices to foster self-discipline, respect, and responsibility among its students. In the application of military discipline, the administration should prioritize consistency and strictness while simultaneously ensuring students' comprehensive understanding of the objectives behind this disciplinary approach. Furthermore, it is crucial to allow for the occasional exercise of student autonomy, integrate humane consideration of individual circumstances, and maintain a clear unity of command to mitigate confusion among the student body. For future research, it is suggested that studies explore the long-term effects of military discipline on personal growth, social interactions, and the professional relevance of these disciplinary practices in the graduates' subsequent careers.

VI. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

A limitation of the study is that it primarily focuses on the positive adaptations of military discipline without exploring potential challenges or variations in individual experiences. Future research could examine how different personality traits, backgrounds, or external factors influence the internalization and effectiveness of military discipline practices.

VII. DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The author(s) declare that they have no financial, personal, or professional interests that could be perceived as influencing the research, analysis, or conclusions presented in this work. There are no conflicts of interest to disclose.

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