

**PHYSICAL HARASSMENT ENCOUNTERED BY ADVANCED OFFICER
OF RESERVED OFFICER TRAINING CORPS:
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY**

A RESEARCH PAPER

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of the Requirements for the Degree
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN CRIMINOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

Physical harassment within the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) remains a sensitive yet significant issue that can affect leadership development, organizational culture, and the well-being of its members. Moustakas' transcendental phenomenology was used to analyze qualitative data from in-depth interviews with ROTC Advanced Officers in Misamis University. Physical harassment in the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) is a touchy but important concern that can impact leadership formation, organizational culture, and members' well-being. Whereas earlier research has tended to survey the experiences of lower-level cadets, little research examines what advanced officers have to say on the matter, as they are tasked to maintain discipline and act as role models within the program. This research sought to explore and explain the lived experiences of ROTC senior officers who had experienced physical harassment. Data were collected from 5–10 purposively chosen participants using in-depth interviewing and thematic analysis. Results indicated common themes that included power imbalance, normalization of physical punishment, emotional and psychological effects, and the tension between leadership and personal vulnerability. In spite of all these difficulties, the participants also identified resilience and coping mechanisms by which they were able to continue performing their functions. The findings of this study are useful in the expansion of knowledge regarding the dynamics of harassment in the context of ROTC units and can provide a foundation for creating better policies, protective measures, and leadership training programs aimed at creating a safer and more supportive environment.

Keywords: *coping mechanisms, leadership development, physical harassment, policy recommendations, vulnerability*

DEDICATION

*This research is respectfully dedicated, above all to God Almighty
for His divine guidance, wisdom, and abundant blessings,
which have been instrumental in the successful
completion of this study.*

*This study is likewise dedicated to our beloved parents, families, and loved ones,
whose unwavering support, patience, and understanding have served
as a constant source of strength and inspiration
throughout the entire research process.*

*It is further dedicated to the Reserved Officers Training Corps advance officers who
willingly and courageously shared their lived experiences.
Their invaluable participation significantly
contributed to the depth and meaningfulness
of this research*

*Finally, the researchers extend their dedication to their mentors, academic advisers,
and the institution for their steadfast guidance, support,
and encouragement, which have been essential in the
accomplishment of this
academic endeavor.*

The Researchers

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The Researchers

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INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), as a major component of the National Service Training Program (NSTP), is designed to instill discipline, patriotism, leadership, and civic responsibility among college students through structured military education (Salvador, 2021). Through formal training, ROTC equips students with foundational military knowledge and leadership skills that contribute to national preparedness and character development (Salvador, 2021). Within this structure, advanced ROTC officers assume significant responsibilities, including leading formations, enforcing discipline, and overseeing drills and exercises (Massey-Torres, 2023). Their role is central to shaping cadets' behavior, values, and performance, highlighting the importance of ethical leadership and professional conduct within the program.

Despite these ideals, the hierarchical and authoritative structure of ROTC may unintentionally create conditions where physical harassment and abuse of power occur (Staebell, 2024). The strict emphasis on obedience and conformity can normalize excessive or harmful disciplinary practices, often justified as character-building or military tradition (Nasution et al., 2022). Consistent with Zimbardo's theory on authority and compliance, individuals within rigid systems may tolerate or participate in harmful behaviors due to institutional pressure and fear of retaliation. This culture of silence discourages reporting and enables abusive practices to persist (Mdletshe & Makhaye, 2025), ultimately contradicting ROTC's mission of developing disciplined, ethical, and morally upright leaders (Kouzes & Posner, 2024).

Physical harassment in this context refers to unwelcome physical contact or the use of force intended to intimidate, punish, or assert dominance (Einarsen et al., 2020). In ROTC training environments, this may take the form of slapping, punching, or forcing individuals to perform physically demanding activities beyond safe limits under the guise of discipline (Bell, 2022). Such experiences can result in physical injury, emotional distress, reduced morale, and impaired leadership performance (Reitano, 2023). Prolonged exposure to these conditions may erode self-confidence, sense of duty, and leadership effectiveness, undermining the officer's development and well-being (Mergen & Ozbilgin, 2021).

While existing research on harassment in military-style organizations often focuses on lower-ranking cadets or recruits, the experiences of advanced ROTC officers remain largely underexplored. These officers are typically perceived as authority figures rather than potential victims, leading to a critical gap in the literature. This oversight limits understanding of how institutional culture and power dynamics may expose even those in leadership positions to mistreatment, affecting their mental health, leadership capacity, and perception of the ROTC environment.

In response to this gap, the present study adopts a phenomenological approach to examine the lived experience of physical harassment encountered by an ROTC Advanced Officer within a university-based training program. Specifically, it seeks to understand the nature of the harassment experienced, the organizational and cultural factors that enabled such behavior, and the physical, emotional, and leadership-related effects on the officer. By exploring how these experiences are perceived, interpreted, and coped with, the study aims to reveal how harassment is rationalized or concealed within ROTC culture. The

significance of this study lies in its focus on a rarely examined population within military training programs. By documenting the lived experience of an advanced officer, the research provides insight into the vulnerability of leaders within rigid hierarchical systems. The findings may inform ROTC administrators, university officials, and policymakers in strengthening accountability mechanisms, improving reporting procedures, and fostering a culture of respect and transparency. Ultimately, this phenomenological study seeks to contribute to the development of a safer, more ethical ROTC training environment where leadership is modeled through integrity rather than intimidation.

Theoretical Framework

This phenomenological study is anchored on Power Control Theory (Gagnon, 2024) and Organizational Climate Theory (Bell, 2022). These theoretical lenses provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how hierarchical power relations and institutional environments within the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) shape the occurrence, normalization, and persistence of physical harassment, particularly as experienced by an Advanced ROTC Officer.

Power–Control Theory, as articulated by Gagnon (2024), focuses on how authority, control, and power asymmetries within structured organizations influence behavior, compliance, and interpersonal interactions. In ROTC training environments, this theory is especially relevant in explaining how rigid hierarchies and command structures may expose even advanced officers, who are typically perceived as authority figures, to physical harassment from higher-ranking personnel. When excessive control is exercised by superiors, abusive practices may be justified as discipline or leadership training, thereby

normalizing physical harassment and discouraging resistance or reporting (Shealy, 2022; Zaheer et al., 2024).

Power Control Theory explains that physical harassment in the Reserved Officer Training Corps (ROTC) may arise from unequal power relationships within the organization (Bell, 2022). Advanced officers, who hold authority over lower-ranking cadets, may use their position to assert dominance, sometimes through excessive or abusive physical actions (Ott, 2024). When power is not properly regulated or monitored, it can lead to misuse, where discipline crosses the line into harassment (Foucault, 2023). This theory highlights that such incidents are often rooted in the imbalance of authority and the tendency of those in power to enforce control in harmful ways.

Within such systems, the concentration of power at higher levels can suppress accountability and foster a culture of silence. Bergemann (2024) notes that individuals in subordinate or semi-subordinate positions, including advanced officers, may hesitate to report abuse due to fear of retaliation, loss of status, or career repercussions. Similarly, Karam and Ghanem (2021) emphasize that organizational norms within hierarchical institutions may unintentionally legitimize harmful practices when authority remains unquestioned. Martínez and Kim (2023) further explain that obedience-driven military training environments discourage individuals from challenging superiors, even when harmful behaviors occur. These insights support the applicability of Power Control Theory in examining how advanced officers may experience physical harassment despite their leadership role, reinforcing the theory's assertion that unequal power relations strongly shape both behavior and institutional response.

Complementing this perspective, Organizational Climate Theory (Bell, 2022) emphasizes how shared perceptions, values, and norms within an organization influence members' experiences and actions (Kimiagari & Baei, 2022). In the context of ROTC programs, organizational climate plays a critical role in determining whether physical harassment is discouraged, tolerated, or normalized. A positive climate characterized by ethical leadership, mutual respect, and transparent communication can protect officers and cadets alike from abusive practices (Burhan et al., 2023). Conversely, a negative or toxic climate, marked by fear, rigid hierarchy, and silence, can enable physical harassment and inhibit reporting.

Organizational Climate Theory focuses on how the overall environment of the ROTC influences behavior among its members (Buckley et al., 2025). If the organizational climate tolerates harsh training methods, lacks clear policies against abuse, or fails to hold individuals accountable, physical harassment can become normalized (Staebell, 2024). The attitudes of leaders, the existing norms, and the level of supervision all contribute to whether such behavior is discouraged or allowed to continue (Montminy, 2022). This theory shows that beyond individual actions, the broader organizational culture plays a significant role in either preventing or enabling physical harassment.

Dickson (2024) argues that organizational climates grounded in respect and accountability significantly reduce the likelihood of abuse, while Reeves et al. (2025) observe that climates characterized by indifference or intimidation often legitimize harassment. In support of this view, Nguyen and Cabardo (2023) found that paramilitary student organizations with transparent leadership and supportive climates reported fewer incidents of harassment. Conversely, Lopez and Tanaka (2024) identified a strong

association between negative organizational climates and increased instances of hazing and physical harassment, particularly in environments where misconduct is tolerated or minimized.

Taken together, Power Control Theory and Organizational Climate Theory provide a robust conceptual foundation for this phenomenological study. These frameworks allow for a deeper exploration of how power dynamics and institutional culture within ROTC programs shape the lived experience of physical harassment encountered by an Advanced ROTC Officer. By applying these theories, the study seeks to uncover how harassment is experienced, rationalized, and sustained within the training environment, and how organizational structures and climates may either perpetuate or prevent such harmful practices.

Conceptual Framework

This part of the study presents the different concepts identified in the study through the different themes. These concepts are thoroughly presented and discussed in this section.

Physical Harassment Framed as Discipline. Physical harassment of officers under ROTC training might be labeled as a form of discipline to make them more resistant, submissive, and better leaders (Bell, 2022). Superior officers may be forced to undergo intensive physical exercises or corrective measures that are labeled as requirements of personal and professional growth (Gibson et al., 2024). Such efforts may lead to confusion between discipline and harassment to create inappropriate situations of physical and mental distress to officers (López-Cabarcos et al., 2023). Labeling physical harassment as a form of discipline might make aggressive acts institutionalized to make it difficult for cadets to

identify harassment. It becomes critically important to understand such labeling to make a clear line between officer training and officer ill treatment (Fielding, 2023).

Perception of discipline as a form of harassment can cause serious emotional and psychological problems for senior officers (Putri, 2024). In this situation, stress, anxiety, and self-esteem depletion can take place on the part of the cadets, who are trying to live up to the standards set by impersonal authority (Mapua, 2024). Internal conflict between carrying out orders and conforming to discipline can cause mental strain (Fine, 2022). By considering the issue of harassment in this manner, it is possible to investigate its effects on officer development (Österman & Boström, 2022).

The conceptual link between physical harassment and the presentation of discipline in ROTC programs can also be related to the ROTC culture (Boldway et al., 2024). Because of the hierarchical system, officers can find it very difficult to resist harsh treatment if they want to win respect and credibility and escape punishment (Schultz, 2023). Even if they find it difficult to resist, some officers could learn to endure it and others could suffer emotional distress and low motivation. The significance of understanding and recognizing these aspects cannot be overemphasized in the development of a conceptual framework for research on leadership, resilience, and personal growth in ROTC (Reitano III, 2023). The link between harassment and the presentation of discipline establishes the conceptual framework (Sabnis & Proctor, 2022).

Excessive and Punitive Physical Practices. Excessive and punitive physical practices in the ROTC are usually applied as a form of training in the name of promoting discipline and strength for the cadets (Cannon et al., 2024). Senior officers could be taken through a series of drills or exercises or punishments for misconduct in the form of

corrective training (Banatao et al., 2024). These actions could result in physical exhaustion or a sense of helplessness among the advanced officers (Civilotti et al., 2022). This illustrates the thin line separating inspiration from oppression. The actions could be presented as the only form of promoting growth in the individual (Prisniakova et al., 2023). It is essential to establish the degree of the occurrence of excessive practices in order to evaluate the impact on the experiences (Golewski, 2023).

These types of punitive behaviors can lead to emotional and psychological distress, impacting the confidence and performance under pressure for these cadets (Navickienė & Vasiliauskas, 2024). These officers can suffer from stress, anxiety, and resentment as they find it challenging to balance between adhering to authority and their own well-being (Acquadro Maran et al., 2022). The hierarchical systems in ROTC can contribute to the punitive behaviors, as these cadets may find it necessary to tolerate difficult treatment in order to preserve their respect and position (Lupao et al., 2025). Emotional intelligence and resilience can be significant in these situations, and officers need to learn to cope with difficult training practices (Zueger et al., 2023).

Normalization of excessive and punitive practices reflects overall cultural demands in the ROTC environment, in which resilience and subordination are placed as high a value as possible (Tompkins Sr, 2025). Camaraderie and social ways of dealing with stress help the officer cope with difficulties in physically demanding operations (Medeiros, 2024). Reflection practices and meaning-making enable the military personnel to reinterpret stressful events in terms of leading by example, in discipline, and in self-control (Austin, 2025). Motivation by meaning helps officers in persevering in spite of the toughness of their training, which instills resilience in them. An understanding of the relationship

between punitive practices, herd mentality, and ways of dealing with stress brings forth understanding of the environment in which officers are developed (Castle et al., 2022).

Emotional and Psychological Distress. Advanced officers in ROTC often face emotional and psychological distress as a result of rigorous training, hierarchical pressures, and physical harassment (Kirschten, 2025). Experiences such as prolonged drills, excessive correction, or intimidation can trigger anxiety, fear, and reduced self-confidence among cadets (Centola, 2025). These emotional challenges can interfere with focus, decision-making, and overall performance during both academic and field activities (Córdova et al., 2023). Understanding the psychological impact of harassment is crucial for identifying how cadets cope with stress and navigate leadership expectations. Emotional distress is an important element in assessing the personal and professional development of officers in ROTC (Looser, 2024).

Hierarchical structures, traditions, and culture in the ROTC can heighten these stress factors, where the officer feels it is necessary or expected to endure in a situation without question (Tompkins Sr, 2025). Perceived requirements for conformity within the program contribute to stress factors, which make it difficult for students to seek help if they are stressed (Nguyen-Thi et al., 2024). Coping mechanisms such as managing emotions, persevering, and reflecting on these issues help officers overcome these challenges (Filstad & Rød, 2024). Internal and external support systems continue to be a significant factor in dealing with stress, both mental and emotional, in this program (Mirbahaeddin & Chreim, 2022).

Addressing emotional and psychological distress is essential for promoting well-being, resilience, and ethical leadership within ROTC programs (Fernandes & Madhulika,

2024). Meaning-making allows cadets to reinterpret challenging experiences as opportunities for growth, fostering leadership transformation despite adversity (Evans, 2023). Motivation through purpose and reflection helps officers maintain focus on long-term goals while navigating stressful or hostile environments (Mitchell, 2025). By balancing endurance, social coping, and reflective practices, cadets can transform distressing experiences into tools for personal and professional development. Understanding these experiences phenomenologically informs policies and practices that support both effective leadership training and officer welfare (Amin, 2025).

Impact on Well-Being and Academic Performance. Physical harassment, excessive training, and hierarchical pressures in ROTC can significantly affect the overall well-being of advanced officers (Reitano, 2023). Cadets often experience fatigue, stress, and burnout, which directly influence their physical health and mental stability (Zueger et al., 2023). These challenges can lead to decreased concentration, memory lapses, and diminished performance in academic and field-related tasks. Understanding the link between training practices and well-being is essential for ensuring cadets can meet both military and academic expectations (Khraban, 2022). Officer health and academic success are therefore intertwined, emphasizing the need for balanced, supportive training environments.

The hierarchical pressure and cultural values in the ROTC may force the armed forces personnel to undertake challenging physical and mental training practices (Tompkins, 2025). At times, the pressure to remain disciplined in spite of academic loads could heighten stress levels and demotivate the individual. While dealing with schoolwork and discipline in the armed forces, the personnel learn ways and means to develop techniques such as emotional control, tolerance, and networking in order to efficiently

handle the conflicting situations (Sylwestrzak, 2023). These techniques help overcome adverse effects or stressors associated with the situations. It is essential to understand the cumulative effects of stressors in the formulation of policies.

Promoting reflection, meaning-making, and motivation through purpose can buffer the negative impact of harassment and stress on performance (Mhaka-Mutepfa & Rampa, 2024). Officers who interpret challenges as opportunities for personal growth are more likely to maintain focus, resilience, and leadership effectiveness. Peer support and collaborative coping strategies further enhance cadets' ability to balance rigorous training with academic responsibilities. Integrating these strategies into ROTC programs ensures that officers develop not only military competence but also personal well-being (Pifer & Buckley, 2024). Understanding how harassment and pressure affect performance helps design training that fosters both professional development and holistic health (Chib et al., 2025).

Experiencing Cultural Norms and Hierarchical Pressure. Advanced officers in ROTC are placed within the highly structured environment of this organization, where cultural norms and hierarchical authority represent a normal condition (Massey, 2023). Cadets often do not question their orders, being internally focused on strict behavior and performance patterns imposed by their training. Such hierarchical pressure may raise the level of acceptability for physical harassment or punitive practices, which could prevent them from recognizing mistreatment. Cultural norms in these programs often make endurance, obedience, and conformity primary concerns, discouraging officers from voicing their concerns (Araoye, 2025). Understanding such dynamics is vital to explore

how officers navigate structures of power while maintaining their personal and professional integrity (Lavis, 2025).

The hierarchical pressure is intricately related with the officers' emotional and mental wellness issues, resulting in stress, nervousness, and reduced levels of motivation (Acquadro et al., 2022). The cadets face a dilemma in following the orders of their seniors in addition to taking care of their own wellness (Jafarpour, 2025). The officers learn methods of dealing with such situations through effective emotional regulation, mutual support, and reflective processes (Gagnon & Monties, 2023). The effects of hierarchy and cultural norms help understand the challenging social setting in which the officers have to function.

Despite cultural and hierarchical pressures, there is a capacity for officers to engage in meaning-making and leadership development in adversity (Stapleton, 2025). Reflection provides cadets with the opportunity to question the purpose of expectations, develop ethical leadership competencies, and successfully negotiate power relations (Melnychenko, et al., 2024). Resilience can be fostered through peer support and social coping mechanisms that enhance the capacity of officers to sustain difficult or punitive practices without sacrificing personal integrity. Purposeful motivation assists officers to refocus their attention on long-term goals, strengthening commitment to purpose beyond institutional pressures. This knowledge of how culture and hierarchy shape experiences can inform strategies toward achieving the necessary balance among discipline, officer well-being, and effective leadership development (Haricharan, 2023).

Endurance and Emotional Regulation. Advanced officers in ROTC develop endurance and emotional regulation as essential skills to navigate physically demanding

and hierarchical training environments (Sowden et al., 2025). Endurance allows cadets to tolerate rigorous drills, prolonged exercises, and stressful situations while maintaining operational effectiveness (Tornero-Aguilea et al., 2024). Emotional regulation enables officers to manage stress, fear, and frustration, ensuring that psychological strain does not compromise performance. These skills are critical for sustaining both physical and mental well-being during challenging training scenarios. Understanding how endurance and emotional regulation are cultivated provides insight into the resilience strategies employed by officers in high-pressure environments (Mumtazah, 2024).

The development of endurance and emotional regulation is closely linked to exposure to physical harassment, hierarchical pressure, and cultural expectations within ROTC (Reitano, 2023). Officers often face situations where they must suppress negative emotions and maintain composure to meet training and performance standards. Peer support and social coping mechanisms reinforce these capacities by providing guidance, encouragement, and shared experiences that model adaptive responses (Khan & Sultan, 2023). Over time, reflection and meaning-making help cadets recognize how these skills contribute to leadership and personal growth. Balancing physical perseverance with emotional control ensures that officers can navigate adversity while maintaining ethical and professional standards.

Endurance and emotional regulation also play a crucial role in fostering motivation and long-term leadership development (Singh & Singh, 2025). By learning to manage stress and physical strain, officers gain confidence in their ability to handle future challenges effectively (Bennell et al., 2022). Reflective practices allow cadets to evaluate experiences, strengthen resilience, and integrate lessons learned into personal and

professional growth. Motivation through purpose supports persistence, helping officers sustain effort despite adverse or punitive conditions (Lingle, 2024). Understanding the interplay between endurance, emotional regulation, and reflective motivation highlights how challenging experiences can be transformed into leadership development opportunities.

Peer Support and Social Coping. Peer support and social coping strategies are important in assisting advanced officers in overcoming challenges in the ROTC program (Ray, 2025). The cadets can depend on each other in seeking emotional support, counseling, and direction in responding to challenging and stressful exercises (Cruise et al., 2025). The process of collaborating and sharing experiences with fellow officers can create a spirit of togetherness and alleviates the emotional burden of having to endure harsh and punitive methods (Mitchell, 2025). Peer support and social coping strategies are important in assisting officers in coping with stress and staying motivated in undertaking challenging tasks (Hamzah et al., 2025).

Social coping strategies are effective in helping officers deal directly with the emotional and psychological effects of hierarchical pressure and physical harassment (Stapleton, 2025). Techniques such as group problem-solving and informal communication of the problem offer outlets where officers can convey their fears and coping strategies to aid in adapting to the socio-cultural requirements of the ROTC sub-culture and environment (Biddix et al., 2022). Such interactions and communications induce the officers to experience the aspect of belongingness, hence developing the officers' ability to handle and understand the emotional dimension of situations through emotional regulation and control to remain calm in difficult conditions (Filstad, 2022). Notably, the importance

of social coping highlights the linkage between collective support and personal resilience strategies (Ventriglio et al., 2025).

The combination of peer support, reflection, and meaning-making can turn tough experiences into development tools for leaders (Markowski et al., 2025). Through the exchange of experiences of hardships and strategies for overcoming them, the cadets benefit from one another's learning and learn about effective problem-solving and making ethical choices (Jafarpour, 2025). Motivation by purpose is reinforced when the officer intimidation of burden translates into the importance of supporting one another toward a common goal. (Burden, 2025). Social support patterns of hardiness increase endurance, affect regulation, and self-esteem (Zarbiv et al., 2025). These considerations highlight the critical application of social or peer relations as a basic component of officer development at an ROTC (Tompkins, 2025).

Meaning Making and Leadership Transformation. Meaning-making is a crucial process through which advanced ROTC officers interpret challenging experiences, such as physical harassment or excessive training, as opportunities for growth (Miller et al., 2025). By reflecting on adverse events, cadets develop insights into their personal strengths, limitations, and leadership capacities (Jafarpour, 2025). This reflective process allows officers to transform negative experiences into lessons that enhance decision-making, ethical judgment, and resilience (Leibovitch et al., 2025). Leadership transformation emerges as cadets integrate these lessons into their professional identities, improving their ability to guide and support others. Understanding meaning-making highlights how adversity can be reframed to promote personal development and effective leadership (Wilson, 2025).

Through structured reflection and analysis, officers learn to contextualize stressful or punitive experiences within a broader framework of responsibility and accountability (Brown, 2025). Cultural norms and hierarchical pressures are reframed as challenges to overcome rather than purely negative forces, fostering adaptive coping strategies (Valeri, 2025). Peer support and social interactions further reinforce this process, allowing officers to discuss experiences and extract lessons collaboratively (Parks, 2025). This integration of reflection and action ensures that officers emerge not only resilient but also capable of ethical and strategic leadership (Saxena, 2025).

Meaning-making also fosters motivation through purpose, as cadets see the value in enduring and learning from challenges (Suminar et al., 2025). Officers begin to understand how their responses to adversity shape team dynamics, influence morale, and impact organizational effectiveness (Faisal & Masroor 2025). Transforming experiences into meaningful insights enhances both confidence and commitment to long-term goals (Celestin, 2025). This process reinforces the connection between personal growth and professional responsibility, ensuring that leadership development is grounded in lived experience (Hibaya et al., 2025). Recognizing the role of meaning-making in leadership transformation provides a framework for understanding how ROTC training can cultivate resilient, reflective, and capable officers (Gettman, 2025).

Motivation through Purpose and Reflection. Motivation through purpose and reflection allows advanced ROTC officers to sustain effort and commitment despite experiencing physical harassment, excessive training, and hierarchical pressure (Stankov, 2025). By reflecting on their experiences, cadets connect daily challenges to long-term personal and professional goals, which strengthens resilience and determination (Jafarpour,

2025). This reflective practice provides meaning to demanding or stressful situations, helping officers maintain focus on their growth and development (Wu, 2025). Understanding the link between purpose and motivation is essential to exploring how cadets persist and thrive in rigorous training environments (Zakirovich, 2025). Motivation through purpose transforms difficult experiences into intentional steps toward leadership and personal excellence (Hamamra et al., 2025).

Reflection enables cadets to critically evaluate their responses to adversity, guiding improvements in emotional regulation, endurance, and decision-making (Jafarpour, 2025). Officers who integrate reflection into daily practice develop greater self-awareness and clarity in prioritizing tasks and goals (Andres, 2025). Peer support often reinforces reflective practices, as cadets discuss experiences, share lessons learned, and encourage mutual growth (Henderson et al., 2025). This combination of reflection, purpose, and social reinforcement strengthens both individual resilience and collective cohesion (Liu, 2025). Recognizing these processes highlights the importance of intentional reflection in promoting well-being and leadership capability within ROTC programs (Sowden et al., 2025).

Motivation by means of purpose and reflection helps advanced ROTC officers in the continued application and dedication in the face of physical harassment, grueling training, and pressure from the hierarchy (Hulme et al., 2025). By reflecting on the experiences they go through, the cadets are in a position to relate the everyday struggle to the future goals they want to achieve (Jafarpour, 2025). This is crucial in aiding the advanced ROTC officers in remaining focused on how they want to develop (Tompkins, 2025). A connection between purpose and motivation plays a critical role in discussing

how the persistence and success in the grueling training environment is achieved (LaRocca et al., 2025).

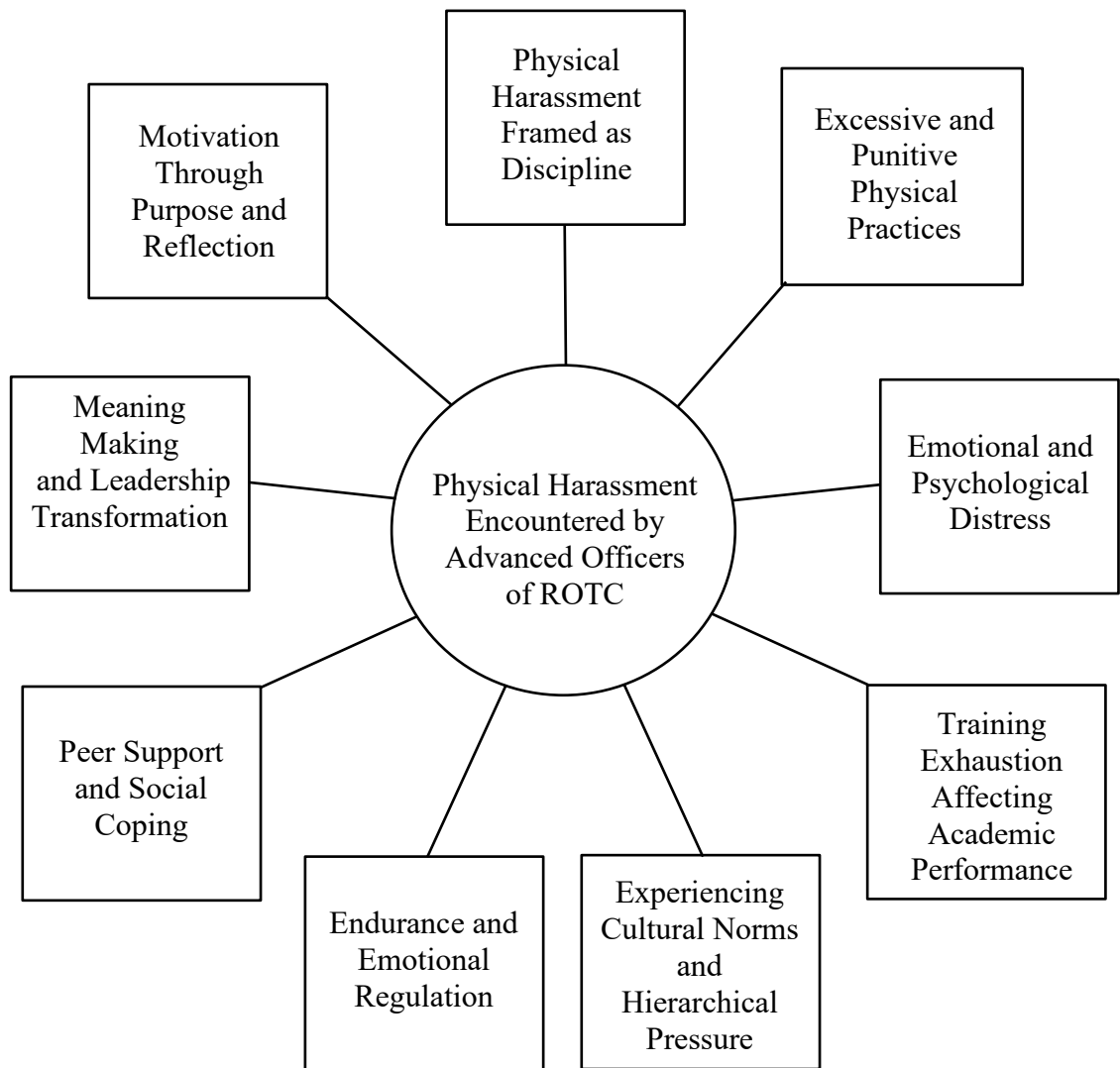


Figure 1. Schematic Diagram of the Study

Objectives of the Study

The study explored the lived experiences of advanced officers of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) regarding physical harassment during their training. Specifically, sought to answers the following:

1. Describe the lived experiences of advanced ROTC officers who encountered physical harassment in the course of their training.
2. Explore the coping mechanisms and responses employed by advanced ROTC officers when they were confronted with physical harassment.

Significance of the Study

This study was significant because it brought attention to the lived experiences of ROTC Advanced Officers who had encountered physical harassment, an issue that remained underexplored despite its implications for leadership development, organizational culture, and trainee welfare. By documenting the forms, causes, and consequences of harassment within a university-based ROTC program, the study provided evidence that informed policy improvements, strengthened accountability, and enhanced understanding of how excessive discipline and power imbalances undermined well-being and leadership effectiveness. Furthermore, the study contributed to discussions on military training ethics and guided institutional reforms toward a safer and more ethical ROTC training environment.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Design

This study used a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore the lived experiences of physical harassment encountered by ROTC Advanced Officers. This approach was suitable for understanding how officers perceive, interpret, and respond to harassment within the hierarchical and disciplined ROTC environment. Through in-depth interviews, the study would capture the forms of harassment, their impact on personal well-being, academics, and leadership, as well as the coping strategies employed. By focusing on firsthand experiences, the design provided rich, contextual insights into the influence of organizational culture, power dynamics, and traditional practices on officers' experiences, informing strategies for safer and more ethical ROTC training.

Settings

This study was conducted at a higher education institution in Ozamiz City with an active ROTC program that trained Advanced Officers. The setting provided a structured environment where discipline, leadership development, and hierarchical interactions shape cadets' experiences, making it ideal for exploring the lived experiences of physical harassment. Data was collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews in private, safe, and neutral locations that encouraged participants to openly share personal experiences. Non-participant observations and review of ROTC documents, such as training manuals and policies, had supplemented the interviews to contextualize experiences and enhance the trustworthiness of the findings.

Participants

The participants of this study consisted of ROTC Advanced Officers purposively selected from the identified institution. Purposive sampling was appropriate for this phenomenological research because it allowed the selection of individuals who have direct, meaningful, and firsthand experiences with physical harassment in the ROTC program (Palinkas et al., 2015). A sample size of five (5) to ten (10) participants was considered sufficient to gather rich, in-depth narratives necessary for exploring the lived experiences of harassment. To ensure relevance and credibility of the data, participants were selected based on the following inclusion criteria: (1) they must be currently enrolled as Advanced ROTC Officers or have recently served in the position; (2) they must have personally experienced or directly witnessed incidents of physical harassment within the ROTC program; and (3) they must be willing to provide informed consent and participate in extensive, in-depth interviews.

Instrument

In this study, a semi-structured interview guide served as the primary data collection instrument. This approach is particularly appropriate for exploring sensitive topics such as physical harassment because it provides the flexibility to probe deeply into participants' experiences while maintaining a consistent structure across all interviews. The guide was designed to elicit both descriptive narratives and reflective insights, allowing the researcher to capture the depth, complexity, and emotional nuances of the participants' lived experiences.

The interview guide was organized into three major sections. The first section gathered demographic information, including the participant's age, academic year,

program of study, and the number of semesters completed in the ROTC Advanced Officer program. The second section explored the nature and context of harassment by examining when, where, and how incidents occurred, the forms of harassment experienced, and the roles played by authority figures or peers. The third section focused on coping mechanisms and support systems, investigating how participants managed the experience and whether they sought assistance from family, peers, mentors, or institutional offices. This section also included questions regarding the impact of harassment on academic performance, leadership capacity, mental health, motivation, and overall well-being.

Data was collected through in-depth, face-to-face interviews conducted in safe, neutral, and private locations to ensure participant comfort, privacy, and openness. Nonverbal cues, emotional expressions, and environmental factors was documented as field notes to support accurate interpretation and enhance contextual understanding. Before data gathering, the interview protocol underwent review and approval by the College Research Committee to ensure adherence to ethical standards and to safeguard participants' rights, confidentiality, and well-being.

Data Gathering Procedure

Before commencing data collection, the researchers secured formal approval from the Dean of the College of Criminology in Ozamiz City, Philippines, and submitted an official request letter to the appropriate institutional authorities to obtain authorization for the study. A separate request was also addressed to the ROTC unit to obtain permission for participant recruitment. Once all institutional approvals were granted, informed consent was obtained from each participant, ensuring that they voluntarily participate and fully

understand the study's objectives, scope, procedures, potential risks, and confidentiality safeguards.

During the interviews, and with the participants' permission, the researcher used a voice recorder to accurately capture verbatim responses while simultaneously documenting non-verbal cues, emotional reactions, and contextual observations through detailed field notes. These procedures enhanced the accuracy, credibility, and completeness of the data. Participants were assured that their identities remained strictly confidential; all personal identifiers were removed during transcription, and pseudonyms were used in all reports and publications.

Ethical standards were rigorously upheld throughout the research process. The study protocol underwent evaluation and approval by the College Research Committee to ensure compliance with institutional guidelines and ethical norms in qualitative research. Furthermore, the study strictly adhered to the provisions of Republic Act No. 10173, also known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012, to safeguard participants' personal information, ensure secure handling of data, and uphold their right to privacy at all stages of the research.

Ethical Considerations

In conducting this study, strict adherence to ethical principles was observed to protect the rights, dignity, and welfare of all participants. Before data collection, the research protocol underwent formal review and approval by the College Research Committee, ensuring full compliance with institutional and national ethical standards. Participants received an Informed Consent Form that clearly explained the purpose, scope, and objectives of the study, as well as their rights to voluntary participation, refusal, or withdrawal at any point without penalty.

During the interviews, the researcher emphasized participant anonymity and the confidentiality of all shared information. Face-to-face, in-depth interviews were held in private and neutral locations selected by the participants to ensure comfort, safety, and privacy. Audio recordings were transcribed verbatim and securely stored, while original files were permanently deleted immediately after transcription. Pseudonyms were assigned in all transcripts, field notes, and reports to prevent the identification of participants and to protect sensitive information.

The study fully adhered to the ethical principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice, ensuring fairness, minimal risk, and respect for autonomy throughout the research process. All procedures strictly complied with Republic Act No. 10173, the Data Privacy Act of 2012, ensuring that participants' personal information was collected, stored, and processed with the highest standards of security and confidentiality. These ethical safeguards ensured that the study was conducted responsibly and that participants' rights and welfare were upheld at all stages of the research.

Data Analysis

Data from this phenomenological study were analyzed using Moustakas' (1994) transcendental phenomenological approach. This method aimed to understand the lived experiences of ROTC Advanced Officers who faced physical harassment in a university-based training environment in Mindanao. The analysis followed these key steps: (1) Bracketing; (2) Horizontalization; (3) Clustering into Themes; (4) Textural Description; (5) Structural Description; and (6) Textural-Structural Synthesis. These steps allowed the researchers to capture the essence of the participants' experiences before, during, and after incidents of physical harassment.

The study used bracketing (*epoche*) to reduce the influence of the researchers' preconceptions, assumptions, and prior knowledge about military discipline and ROTC training practices. This process ensured that personal beliefs and biases regarding discipline, authority, and leadership were set aside. This approach allowed for a deeper and more genuine understanding of the participants' experiences. During the selection of participants and interviews, the researchers had maintained neutrality. They used open-ended questions to encourage ROTC Advanced Officers to express their thoughts, emotions, and reflections freely, without influence from the researchers' expectations.

Next, the technique of horizontalization was applied to systematically analyze the interview data. This involved identifying and listing significant verbatim statements related to experiences of physical harassment, disciplinary practices, emotional reactions, and coping mechanisms. Each statement was initially treated as having equal importance. Repetitive, irrelevant, or unrelated statements were removed, while the remaining meaningful expressions, referred to as horizons, highlighted the core elements of the participants' experiences within the ROTC training environment.

After this process, clustering into themes was conducted to organize the invariant horizons into central themes that best represented the participants' shared experiences. The data were reduced to core thematic categories that reflected common patterns, including emotional and psychological impact, physical exhaustion and strain, normalization of physical harassment as discipline, and its effects on academic performance and leadership roles. These themes formed a clear textural framework that captured the emotional, psychological, and physical aspects of the participants' experiences.

The textural description, or the description of what occurred, was developed using direct quotes from the participants to illustrate their firsthand accounts of physical harassment. These narratives offered rich and detailed insights into the participants' experiences, including feelings of fear, stress, fatigue, resilience, and self-reflection. The meaning units derived from these accounts were organized under the identified themes, providing a deeper understanding of how physical harassment affected their well-being, academic responsibilities, and leadership performance.

The final step involved textural-structural synthesis. In this stage, the researchers integrated both the textural and structural descriptions to create a composite representation of the phenomenon. This synthesis captured the essence of physical harassment as experienced by ROTC Advanced Officers, highlighting how power dynamics, organizational culture, and traditional disciplinary practices shaped their experiences. The synthesized narrative revealed the psychological, emotional, and social factors that influenced how participants endured, interpreted, and coped with physical harassment. To support an organized analysis, the interview data were processed using NVivo software. This tool helped with coding, theme development, and validating the final thematic structure.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study explored the lived experiences of Advanced ROTC Officers regarding physical harassment encountered within the ROTC program. Through in-depth interviews, the participants shared their personal experiences, challenges, coping mechanisms, and realizations related to physical harassment. The analysis of their narratives provided meaningful insights into how harassment affected them emotionally, psychologically, socially, and academically, as well as how these experiences shaped their perspectives, discipline, and leadership development.

Thematic analysis revealed several significant themes emerging from the participants' experiences, namely: *Physical Harassment Framed as Discipline; Excessive and Punitive Physical Practices; Emotional and Psychological Distress; Training Exhaustion Affecting Academic Performance; Experiencing Cultural Norms and Hierarchical Pressure; Endurance and Emotional Regulation; Peer Support and Social Coping; Meaning Making and Leadership Transformation; and Motivation Through Purpose and Reflection*. These themes collectively describe the realities encountered by Advanced ROTC Officers and highlight the complex nature of physical harassment within the ROTC environment.

Physical Harassment Framed as Discipline

Physical Harassment Framed as Discipline deals with the normalization of tough physical punishment practices in the ROTC program, which considers too much exercise and too many strenuous activities as legitimate tools of developing vigorous discipline, hardness, and compliance. But it is precisely in developing disciplined toughness that these

practices cross the expected boundaries of professional conduct (Victoria, 2025). In support of this theme is the officers' common recognition that while they at first considered it a normal, traditional practice of the ROTC, they have gained an insight into limits that were eventually discerned (Tompkins, 2025). Many have pointed out that while tougher discipline is expected in any military-driven setting, their continued experience with too much of the too-harsh approach of physical punishment against them eventually clarified that one should develop ruggedness through strong discipline without being physically or emotionally abusive (Sauer, 2024).

“At first, I thought it was just part of the training, but later I realized some actions crossed the line between discipline and abuse.” (Officer 6)

“Discipline and strict training are normal in ROTC, but there is a boundary between discipline and actions that could harm cadets.” (Officer 1)

“I accepted them as part of tradition, but later realized leaders must distinguish between discipline and harmful practices.” (Officer 9)

Physical harassment framed as discipline reflects a deeply represents a long-held tradition of physical punishment deemed necessary for instilling discipline, resilience, and strength of character in cadets (Clarke & Plant, 2023). In the context of ROTC programs, grueling exercise routines and corrective actions tend to become normalized within tradition-based programs to which cadets are expected to submit whether or not their legitimacy is questioned (Turay, 2022). By this means, there is no clear demarcation line between discipline and physical punishment to the point where physical punishment is systematized within discipline for correction rather than being used judiciously within learning programs.

With the passage of time, there comes an increased understanding of the implications of these behaviors, especially when the process of discipline affects physical

security and emotional well-being (Bear et al., 2022). The pervasive nature of intense training programs underscores the culture of defining boundaries in terms of responsible leadership (Iqbal & Parray, 2025). Discipline is increasingly being realized as a process that should improve character and strength without causing unnecessary hurt or harm that affects emotional or physical security in the context of professional standards of training and development (Wailling et al., 2022).

The implications of this conclusion indicate a fundamental requirement for character development programs offered by ROTC to undertake a reassessment of discipline delivery within a training context (Malone, 2022). The potential for normalized abusive physical punishment to embody poor leadership culture could have a negative effect on cadets' physical health, psychology, and motivation (Joseph, 2024). The conclusions drawn from this study support recognizing fundamental criteria that define proper corrective exercise from abusive exercise. Improvement in educational programs offered by current cadet leadership to focus on ethical decision-making, respect, and safety could mitigate poor exercise culture within this context (Jafarpour, 2025).

Excessive and Punitive Physical Practices

Excessive and punitive physical practices may involve being subjected to too much physical activity through extreme physical exercises or urges to undertake too much physical drilling beyond what is called for in standard discipline (Hellison et al., 2025). Many officers complained of having to undertake too much physical activity beyond what was standard in their discipline (Hall, 2022). Examples of these were physical exercises repeated too often, too much drilling, and corrective measures deemed too punitive or unnecessary. Many officers complained of having to undertake too much physical activity

which involved lengthy physical exercises beyond what was standard in their discipline (Wagner et al., 2023). Being subjected to too much physical exercise often entailed physical strain to cadets who were already fatigued by other means beyond their discipline (Chauhan, (2022). Such measures were often perceived to border on the punitive aspect rather than merely focusing on discipline to build resilience within cadets.

“Excessive push-ups, long periods of strenuous drills, and sudden punishments that seemed unnecessary.” (Officer 1)

“Forced excessive push-ups, slaps during disciplinary actions, and being physically dragged into formation.” (Officer 6)

“Extended drills, intense exercises, and prolonged standing under the sun.” (Officer 3)

Too much punishment by physical means, even if justified as a way to instill discipline and resilience, is reflective of the thin line a leader is expected to observe in this regard (Riley, 2025). Physical exercises going beyond proper standards might actually pose a threat to morale, leading to fatigue in some individuals, thus creating stress, which is not limited to the training sessions, as shown in these instances, where discipline does not necessarily equate effective leadership.

Factual evidence from the officers’ experiences indicates that such practices often included repetitive, strenuous exercises, extended drills, and corrective actions that were perceived as overly harsh or unnecessary (Dovidio & Solomon, 2025). Instances involved excessive push-ups, prolonged standing under extreme conditions, intense physical tasks, and even direct physical coercion (Marquina et al., 2022). These measures, while framed as methods to test endurance and instill toughness, consistently caused physical fatigue and emotional strain, highlighting the tangible consequences of punitive approaches. The findings suggest that although some resilience may be built through these challenges, the

lack of limits and proportionality can negatively affect both the physical and psychological well-being of participants, emphasizing the need for training practices that balance rigor with fairness and care (Galderisi et al., 2024).

The implications of these findings make evident the need for a more balanced and considerate mentality with respect to physical exercise and discipline within the context of the ROTC program (Gagnon, 2024). The harmful effects of too much of what is thought to be good exercise may have negative implications for cadets' physical longevity and motivational levels (Okhrimenko et al., 2023). Exercise routines ought to take a different approach by focusing on physical exercises that promote discipline by working within reasonable boundaries (Siedentop & Van der Mars, 2022). There should be measures put in place to focus on developing discipline among cadets in order to develop resilient leaders by working within reasonable boundaries.

Emotional and Psychological Distress

Emotional and Psychological Distress emerges as the emotional toll and psychological burden that officers endure in reaction to the harsh disciplinary procedures and extreme physical requirements of the ROTC program (Singer, 2024). This theme illustrates the emotional states of fear, humiliation, anxiety, and self-doubt, which influence the well-being, drive, and confidence of advance officers in the program, as well as in academic and leadership capacities (Ankori et al., 2022). Respondents often conveyed personal experiences of emotional and psychological distress that included the emotional states of humiliation, pressure, anxiety, and utter exhaustion in the harsh training conditions (Li et al., 2024). It brought them fear, mental strain, and self-doubt, sometimes causing them to question the extent of their personal confidence and ability to lead other people.

Even if the immediate emotional reaction to the actual personal experiences of the respondents had been discouragement and mental anguish, many of them revealed that the long process of going through these difficulties has brought them emotional resilience, perseverance, and emotional regulation. However, the observation could also specifically state that the dominant immediate emotional response to harsh disciplinary procedures has been the erosion of personal confidence, prior to the actual positive personal development that could logically occur in such programs.

“I felt humiliated, exhausted, and sometimes even discouraged; it created stress and fear instead of building confidence.” (Officer 1)

“I felt pressured and anxious, as though I had no choice but to endure it.” (Officer 2)

“During those moments, I felt physically drained and mentally pressured. I sometimes doubted my decision to take the officer role.” (Officer 3)

“I felt uncomfortable and disheartened while experiencing it, as it created both physical and mental strain.” (Officer 4)

“I felt pressured and tired during the activity. Afterward, I felt a mix of frustration and accomplishment for being able to endure it.” (Officer 5)

“I felt physically and mentally strained, but afterwards, I also felt a sense of endurance and determination.” (Officer 9)

“I felt exhausted but learned endurance and control.” (Officer 10)

The results reveal that emotional and psychological distress can be an experienced consequence of strict disciplinary methods and excessive physical conditioning that exists in ROTC programs. It is likely that these consequences can produce feelings of fear, humiliation, anxiety, or mental exhaustion that can interfere with personal self-confidence and personal motivation, especially at an early level of exposure to an intensive program (Farokhzadian et al., 2024). Continuing pressure from these sources can also be an

extension beyond program or class levels that can impact personal study or overall welfare. It can be recognized that personal discipline applied at too high an intensity can be counterproductive in achieving personal excellence at an early level of personal leadership development (Bandura, 2023).

Even in the face of these adverse immediate impacts, there is evidence emerging of the potential for these cadets to develop a sense of endurance, control, and resilience as a result of their exposure to these challenges (Zueger et al., 2023). Yet this particular aspect of resilience is not identified until a considerable amount of distress has been experienced, and this points to a pressing issue of challenge and support within this training process. The evidence points to a training process where a certain degree of resilience and discipline can be built without necessarily causing psychological distress (Stein et al., 2022).

The implications of these findings underscore the need to reassess the way in which disciplines are carried out in current ROTC training programs in order to guarantee that leadership training is not occurring at the cost of the mental and emotional well-being of the cadets. A training approach that provides proper guidelines in defining discipline that is developmental as opposed to discipline that is unnecessarily psychologically taxing, combined with the development of positive leadership approaches, communication, and proper authority behavior, will enable the ROTC to produce strong leaders that are driven through motivation and trust, as opposed to intimidation, fear, and coercion.

Training Exhaustion Affecting Academic Performance

A theme that arises from Training Exhaustion Affecting Academic Performance is that the pressures and challenges of ROTC training have consequences for the cadets' physical, emotional, and mental well-being, as well as the ability to maintain academic

responsibilities (Reitano III, 2023). It is possible that the intense training, stress, and overuse of discipline can result in cadet exhaustion, anxiety, and poor academic showing, thus emphasizing the consequences of training on the cadet's well-being and academic success (Khraban, 2022). Many of the officers personally related the pressure and challenges of the ROTC training to the effects experienced on one's well-being and ability to perform well in academic assignments (Gagnon, 2024). Relationships between personal exhaustion, stress, and the need to deliver well in the face of the highest standards set by the training can result in personal well-being and academic success, thereby highlighting the challenge of achieving well through the relevant pressures and challenges (Chemagosi, 2024).

"It affected my well-being by adding stress and sometimes lowering my self-esteem." (Officer 1)

"There were moments when my focus in class was reduced because of exhaustion from training." (Officer 2)

"It interfered with my academic performance by limiting my ability to concentrate." (Officer 4)

The experiences that were reported indicate that this rigorous nature of training bears serious consequences for cadets on both their general well-being and academic performance (Zueger et al., 2023). Long sessions of physical demands, high-pressure discipline, and constant mental strain to live up to very high expectations eventually contribute to fatigue, stress, and emotional tension (Kumar et al., 2024). Such states may interfere with concentration, retention, and full participation in academic work by cadets, suggesting that the demands of training extend beyond the physical realm to disrupt cognitive and affective (Petrachkov et al., 2023). The findings call for attention in training

programs on the need for balance in insisting on physical rigors with concern for the cadets' psychological well-being and academic concerns (Mapua, 2024).

Factual evidence from the findings indicates that the physical and psychological demands of ROTC can directly impact performance and personal well-being (Merritt, 2022). Cadets reported experiencing mental fatigue and stress that reduced focus and lowered self-confidence, while extended physical training limited the energy and concentration available for academic tasks (Kolesnichenko et al., 2025). These outcomes highlight the interconnected nature of physical, emotional, and cognitive demands in high-intensity programs, demonstrating that excessive strain in one area can create measurable challenges in others (Srinivasan, 2025). Ensuring cadets' health and academic success requires deliberate strategies that integrate recovery, support, and sustainable training practices (Tornero-Aguilera, 2024)

The implications of these findings stress the need for the ROTC programs to maintain the well-being of the cadets in addition to training (Candaza et al., 2024). This is particularly the case should the physical and disciplinary aspects begin to have adverse effects on the mental health and academic prospects of the cadets. This will particularly have the training for leadership development called into question (Lansing et al., 2023). With the implementation of techniques such as rest and mental health or academic management practices in place, the stress and fatigue associated will have less impact on the physical strength and academic concentration of the cadets (Ojo, 2024). As such, the ROTC can help in the development of well-rounded and sharp-minded leaders.

Experiencing Cultural Norms and Hierarchical Pressure

Experiencing Cultural Norms and Hierarchical Pressure is the way in which the "cultural" norms, practices, and power structures that exist within military-style training affect the cadets of the ROTC program (Lenhart, 2025). This aspect of the study shows that the practices and norms of the program are often passed down through the "oldest tradition of the officers" and that the "stiff discipline" and "severe punishment" that exist in the program are necessary to increase the cadets' "resilience, obedience, and solidarity." This demonstrates that the practices of the program are designed to build on the cultural perceptions of what constitutes acceptable procedures and actions, and that these cultural perceptions are largely influenced by the hierarchical structure in place within the program, in which the "greater strength and prestige" of the program's "Greater Power" ensure that the cadets do not question these practices and procedures, and in which the "weaker members" of the program, the cadets, are subject to all the risks of the Greater Power.

"Some officers repeat what they themselves experienced during their own training; Hierarchy makes it difficult for cadets to question such actions." (Officer 1)

"It reflects traditional military culture passed down through generations." (Officer 3)

"It is also rooted in the belief that hardship creates stronger soldiers. Tradition in military-style training makes it a common practice." (Officer 4)

"Usually experience this because of strict discipline enforcement, leadership testing, or traditional military practices passed down by senior officers. Sometimes it is also due to misinterpretation of authority by trainers or cadet officers." (Officer 7)

"Cadets usually experience this because of the traditional military culture where physical punishments are used as a form of discipline, accountability, or to build toughness and unity among trainees." (Officer 8)

"Participants often experience this because of the traditional culture in ROTC training, where hardships are viewed as a test of loyalty, obedience, and resilience."

Sometimes it is also caused by a misuse of authority, when punishments go beyond reasonable discipline.” (Officer 8)

Experiencing cultural norms and hierarchical pressure in ROTC training demonstrates how deeply ingrained traditions and strict authority structures shape cadet behavior, perceptions, and leadership development (Massey, 2023). The combination of long-standing military culture, hierarchical enforcement, and peer expectations creates a learning environment where strict discipline and rigorous physical demands are normalized, and questioning authority is often discouraged (Powell et al., 2025). While these structures aim to instill resilience, obedience, and unity, they also highlight the need for critical reflection on how hierarchical pressures influence both the fairness of training and the well-being of cadets (Jafarpour, 2025). Understanding this dynamic is essential for fostering a leadership culture that balances discipline with ethical and responsible practices (Ughulu, 2024).

Findings have revealed that cadets are regularly subjected to traditional military culture practices, which are transmitted by senior officers or from cadets of older generations (Cheremisova, 2022). Such practices include physical punishment, tests of endurance, and rule enforcement, which are performed with a view to toughness, responsibility, and solidarity (Aitchison, 2022). The hierarchical system creates more compelling pressures to conform, with less room to question or contest abusive and inappropriate assertions of power (Mucak, 2024). Sometimes, these situations create physical and emotional hardship for cadets, which expose the conflict between tradition and ethical elasticity of discipline. The evidence suggests that cadets under hierarchical and cultural pressures are deeply impacted, affecting perceptions of power and command (Robinson, 2023).

These implications for the critical scrutiny that the tradition of hierarchy and its bearing on training practices need to undergo within the ROTC programs (Bell, 2022). While discipline and structure are necessary, safeguards must be put in place to prevent abuses of authority or the application of unnecessary physical or emotional burdens (Kay, 2024). Promoting a questioning culture toward excessive practices and ethical leadership at all levels will allow cadets to develop resilience and obedience without compromising their well-being. This approach would not only preserve what was worthwhile in the hierarchical and disciplined training but also foster a more reflective, equitable, and responsible leadership culture for the officers of the future (Fagerland & Bergh, 2025).

Endurance and Emotional Regulation

Endurance and Emotional Regulation refers to the ability to persist through physically and mentally demanding ROTC training while maintaining control over emotions and responses (Piatka, 2022). It involves developing resilience, self-discipline, and stress-management skills that enable individuals to handle challenges effectively without letting frustration, fear, or fatigue undermine performance (Prathaban, 2025). This theme highlights how ROTC training challenges individuals to develop both physical endurance and emotional control in high-pressure situations (McGraw, 2023). Officers described learning to manage fear, stress, and frustration while continuing to perform demanding tasks, often experiencing determination alongside anxiety or discomfort. By staying composed, pushing through hardships, and reframing challenges as opportunities for growth, they strengthened resilience, self-discipline, and the ability to maintain focus under pressure, ultimately enhancing their capacity to handle demanding leadership responsibilities (Sandua, 2024).

“I learned to control my emotions and push through.” (Officer 1)

“Fear and determination existed at the same time.” (Officer 2)

“I stayed calm, endured the pain, and finished what was asked of me.” (Officer 8)

“Overcoming these hardships made me more determined to continue.” (Officer 3)

“I chose to take it as part of my growth in ROTC.” (Officer 5)

“It challenged me to remain composed under pressure.” (Officer 4)

Endurance and emotional regulation demonstrate that basic training in ROTC involves not only physical but emotional readiness, learning to deal with emotions during challenging situations (Sapinsley, 2024). The process of overcoming fear, tiredness, and stress in order to accomplish assigned tasks influenced the formation of character traits like resilience, determination, and self-control (Biggs et al., 2024). In other words, through learning to stay calm and determined, people are able to overcome obstacles with confidence, as they convert challenging situations into opportunities (Halilsoy, 2024).

From the results, factual evidence emerging through the findings illustrates how the exposure of the cadets to intense pressure situations promoted them in being emotionally regulated (Navickienė & Vasiliauskas, 2024). They had to manage their anxious and frustrated levels when undergoing arduous exercises, when undergoing corrective or demanding drills as a way of remaining composed, and when changing difficulties into opportunities for growth (Stubbs et al., 2024). These strategies helped them build their mental toughness, taught them discipline, and helped them manage their stress levels, making it an essential element in making successful and competent leaders (Mautz, 2024).

The implications of this finding suggest that ROTC programs should intentionally incorporate training and support strategies that foster both physical endurance and

emotional regulation (Hanks, 2025). By providing opportunities to practice stress management, composure under pressure, and resilience-building exercises, cadets can develop the mental and emotional skills necessary to handle high-stakes situations effectively (Hoffman, 2025). This not only enhances individual well-being and performance but also contributes to producing leaders who can remain calm, decisive, and empathetic while guiding others in challenging or stressful environments (Fletcher et al., 2024).

Peer Support and Social Coping

Peer Support and Social Coping highlights the role of relationships and social networks in helping individuals manage stress and overcome challenges. (Khan & Sultan, 2023). Through sharing experiences, seeking guidance, and receiving encouragement from peers and mentors, are able to build resilience, maintain motivation, and sustain their well-being in demanding environments. (Wang & Wu, 2025). This theme illustrates how social interactions and peer connections serve as essential coping mechanisms in managing the demands of ROTC training (Benson, 2025). Officers relied on discussing experiences, seeking guidance, and sharing challenges with fellow cadets and mentors to relieve stress and gain emotional support (Jafarpour, 2025). These interactions provided reassurance, practical advice, and a sense of solidarity, helping individuals feel understood and less isolated. By leaning on peer networks, they were able to recover from difficult experiences, maintain resilience, and sustain their motivation and effectiveness as leaders (Celestin, 2025).

“Talking with fellow officers and friends helps me release stress.” (Officer 1)

“Engaging with peers who shared similar experiences helped alleviate the burden.” (Officer 4)

“Sharing experiences with my peers also helps me feel supported.” (Officer 5)

“Talking with trusted peers and seniors helps lighten the burden.” (Officer 3)

“Seeking support from fellow officers and mentors helped me recover.” (Officer 8)

Peer support and social coping play a crucial role in sustaining well-being and performance in challenging training environments. Parmar et al., 2025). The presence of a supportive network allows individuals to process stress, share burdens, and gain emotional reassurance, which in turn strengthens resilience and motivation (Liu et al., 2025). By engaging with peers and mentors, individuals are able to navigate difficulties more effectively, feel less isolated, and maintain a positive outlook, ultimately enhancing both personal growth and leadership capacity (Ganti et al., 2025).

Factual evidence from the findings indicates that consistent interaction with fellow officers and mentors serves as a key strategy for managing stress and recovering from demanding experiences (Akers, 2025). Sharing challenges, seeking advice, and discussing coping strategies not only provides emotional relief but also reinforces problem-solving skills and adaptive responses to adversity (Pacheco, 2025). These social mechanisms contribute to sustained engagement, improved confidence, and the ability to lead effectively, demonstrating that peer networks are integral to both individual well-being and the overall functioning of the ROTC unit (Olonilua & Ogbeleakhu 2025).

The implications of this finding suggest that ROTC programs should actively foster a culture of peer support and mentorship to enhance cadets’ well-being and resilience (Benson, 2025). Encouraging open communication, teamwork, and shared reflection can help cadets cope with the physical and emotional demands of training, reduce stress, and

prevent burnout (Jafarpour, 2025). By integrating structured opportunities for peer interaction and mentorship, the program can strengthen social cohesion, promote adaptive coping strategies, and develop leaders who are not only resilient themselves but also capable of supporting and motivating others effectively (Beck Wells, 2025).

Meaning-Making and Leadership Transformation

Meaning-Making and Leadership Transformation refers to the process by which challenging and adverse experiences are interpreted as meaningful lessons that reshape leadership values and behavior (Brooker & Mack 2025). Through reflection and personal growth, these experiences contribute to the development of more empathetic, ethical, and self-aware leaders who consciously transform hardship into improved leadership practices (Subrahmanyam, 2025). This theme highlights how challenging experiences prompted a deeper understanding of leadership and the responsibility it entails (Andersen et al., 2025). Officers reflected on past hardships and used those insights to shape more thoughtful and ethical approaches, emphasizing fairness, guidance, and balance rather than fear or punishment (Kumar et al., 2025). The experiences encouraged a conscious effort to avoid repeating harsh practices and reinforced the idea that effective leadership combines firmness with empathy (Nurohman, 2025). As a result, adversity became a catalyst for transforming leadership style, fostering confidence, and promoting practices that motivate and develop cadets constructively (Jafarpour, 2025).

“It shaped how I now view leadership and training practices.” (Officer 1)

“I became more cautious because I do not want to repeat the same harsh methods.” (Officer 2)

“I strive to lead cadets with fairness, not fear.” (Officer 9)

“It taught me the importance of balancing strictness with fairness when dealing with subordinates.” (Officer 7)

“I realized that motivation grows stronger when cadets are guided, not harassed.” (Officer 1)

“It gave me confidence to apply leadership with balance — firm but not abusive.” (Officer 1)

Meaning-making and leadership transformation reveal that challenging experiences within ROTC serve as important opportunities for developing reflective and responsible leadership (Sowden, 2025). Adversity and exposure to harsh training practices prompted a reassessment of leadership values, emphasizing the need to balance discipline with fairness, guidance, and respect (Cheta-Maclean & Ololube 2025). Rather than relying on fear or punitive measures, leaders learned to integrate empathy and ethical considerations into their approach, transforming past hardships into lessons that shape more constructive and motivating leadership practices (Anastasiou, 2025).

Factual evidence from the findings shows that experiences of physical and emotional challenges led to heightened awareness of the impact of leadership actions on subordinates. Leaders reported adopting strategies that prioritize guidance over harassment, applying firmness without abuse, and fostering motivation through support and encouragement (Anno, 2025). These responses indicate that reflection on difficult experiences contributes to improved confidence, ethical decision-making, and a more balanced approach to leadership, ultimately enhancing the overall effectiveness and well-being of the cadets under their supervision (Karapetyan, 2025).

The implications of this finding suggest that ROTC programs can benefit from intentionally fostering reflective practices and leadership development that emphasize ethical decision-making and empathy (Longoria, 2025). By encouraging officers to

critically evaluate their experiences and consider the impact of their actions on others, training can cultivate leaders who are not only disciplined but also fair, supportive, and effective in motivating cadets(Zakirovich, 2025).This approach has the potential to break the cycle of harsh, fear-based practices, promote a healthier training environment, and produce leaders who are capable of guiding others with both authority and respect (Parks, 2025).

Motivation Through Purpose and Reflection

Motivation Through Purpose and Reflection refers to the process by which individuals sustain their commitment to ROTC by reconnecting with their personal goals, sense of service, and reasons for leadership, especially after facing challenges (Centola, 2025). Through reflection on both positive and negative experiences, motivation is strengthened as hardships are transformed into lessons that guide personal growth and ethical leadership (Bartlett, 2025). This theme is reinforced by the common tendency to cope with challenges by revisiting personal purpose and engaging in reflection. Rather than allowing difficult experiences to diminish commitment, individuals drew motivation from understanding why they joined ROTC and what they hoped to achieve as leaders (Sun, et al.,2025). Through reflection, hardships were reframed as meaningful lessons that contributed to personal growth, strengthened confidence, and shaped more responsible leadership practices (Matlhaba, 2025). Over time, these reflective processes transformed adversity into a source of motivation, enabling continued development and a more purposeful approach to leading others (Eschenbacher, 2025).

“I remind myself of my purpose in ROTC.” (Officer 1)

“Reflection helps me transform hardship into motivation.” (Officer 2)

“I remind myself of the bigger purpose of ROTC.” (Officer 9)

“It ultimately improved my confidence in handling cadets.” (Officer 4)

“Over time, I recovered by using the experience as fuel to become a better leader.” (Officer 8)

Motivation through purpose and reflection demonstrates how commitment to ROTC is sustained by continuously reconnecting with personal values, leadership goals, and a sense of service (Centola, 2025). Rather than being weakened by challenging experiences, motivation is reinforced when individuals consciously reflect on their reasons for joining and the broader mission of the program (Smith, 2025). This reflective process allows hardships to be understood not merely as obstacles, but as integral components of growth that strengthen character, responsibility, and dedication to leadership (Mulyono, 2025).

Factual evidence from the findings indicates that reflection plays a crucial role in restoring confidence and sustaining engagement despite adversity (Sicora, 2025). By reframing difficult experiences as learning opportunities, individuals were able to regain motivation, improve their self-confidence, and develop a more mature approach to leadership (Liang et al., 2025). This process contributed to a stronger sense of purpose and ethical responsibility, enabling leaders to handle cadets more effectively while maintaining discipline grounded in respect, understanding, and long-term professional development (Jafarpour, 2025).

The implications of this result highlight the importance of integrating reflection and purpose-driven motivation into ROTC leadership development (Cary et al., 2025). Training programs that encourage self-reflection and reinforce the core values and mission

of ROTC can help sustain motivation, especially during periods of stress or hardship (Gibney, 2025). By fostering an environment where challenges are framed as opportunities for learning rather than discouragement, ROTC can cultivate leaders who are resilient, self-aware, and guided by purpose, ultimately leading to more ethical, confident, and effective leadership practices (Perkins, 2025).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study shows that physical harassment is still a big problem in the ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corps) training environment, even Advanced Officers who are supposed to be the model of leadership and discipline get it. The study exposed how a power imbalance, organizational culture, and the continuation of harsh disciplining practices cause emotional trauma, physical fatigue, and difficulties in academic and leadership performance. Even through these hardships, the participants still manifested their resilience and adaptive coping mechanisms, which point to the personal cost of harassment and the strength needed to put up with it. The study, therefore, calls for a thorough review of disciplinary practices to ensure that leadership development in the ROTC is based on respect, ethical behavior, and concern for well-being.

It is suggested to the ROTC administrators and the university officials that they might want to review and improve close monitoring or supervision on discipline so that training practices can be clearly differentiated from physical harassment based on the findings of this research. Leadership and management training programs may also consider including components on ethical leadership, emotional intelligence, and respectful methods of disciplining that would prevent the normalizing of abusive practices. One way to help the officers and the cadets to be free of their fear of retaliation when they report their cases is by establishing confidential and accessible reporting mechanisms. In addition, there should be regular monitoring and part of the observation of the researchers we recommend evaluation of training activities to ensure the physical and psychological safety of all those who participate in these activities.

DECLARATION OF THE USE OF AI TOOLS

We acknowledge the use of ChatPDF to scan and read existing studies about physical harassment, and use it to identify what study we could conduct based on its results and recommendations. We also used ChatPDF to identify other relevant topics for the rationale/background of our study based on our approved title, Physical Harassment Encountered by Advanced Officer f Reserved Officer Training Corps: A Phenomenological Study.

Prompts:

- Based on the results and recommendations, generate a list of studies we could conduct related to physical harassment experienced by ROTC officers.
- Based on our title, help me identify other possible topics we could include in our rationale, organized from broad to specific, such as harassment in the military, ROTC training environment, psychological effects of harassment, and coping mechanisms of ROTC officers.

We also acknowledge the use of ChatGPT in revising the abstract of our study titled A Case Study on Physical Harassment Encountered by ROTC Advanced Officer. It was also used to enhance the clarity and structure of our paragraphs, as well as to refine the interview questions included in our research instrument.

Prompts:

- Improve the following paragraphs: (Paste)
- Improve the following questions for the interview guide: (Paste)

- Revise the abstract of the study. Add one sentence at the beginning of the paragraph summarizing the rationale/background of the study related to physical harassment encountered by ROTC advanced officers.

We also acknowledge the use of the Grammarly application to check and correct spelling, spacing, and grammatical errors, including sentence construction, verb tenses, and punctuation, from the abstract up to the transcript of the interview for our study titled A Case Study on Physical Harassment Encountered by ROTC Advanced Officer

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Introduction

1. Introduces self and the aim of the research.
2. Discuss the focus of the study.
3. Give informed consent and confidentiality.
4. Explained what the interview is going to be like (audio recording and notes)
5. Check for any questions from a participant before proceeding with the interview.
6. Check out the audio recorder to ensure it will work.
7. Ending that the participant feels comfortable and ready to continue.

Opening Questions

1. To begin, could you share your age, academic year, and your current role or position within the ROTC program?
2. How long have you been serving as an advanced ROTC officer, and what motivated you to pursue this role?
3. Have you ever experienced or observed situations in the ROTC program that you would describe as physical harassment? If so, could you share your initial thoughts or reflections about these experiences?

Core Questions

1. What forms of physical harassment have you personally experienced as an ROTC advanced officer?
 - 1.1. How did you feel during or after experiencing this?
 - 1.2. How often do these situations occur in your training?
2. Why did you personally experience this physical harassment during your ROTC training?
 - 2.1. What do you think were the reasons behind why this harassment happening to you?
 - 2.2. How did you feel while experiencing this physical harassment?

- 2.3. How has experiencing physical harassment affected your personal well-being, academic performance, or leadership as an officer?
- 2.4. How does it affect your motivation or confidence in leading cadets?
- 2.5. How do you cope or recover from these effects?

Concluding Statements

1. Thank you sincerely for sharing your experiences and perspectives. Your insights are invaluable to this study.
2. Before we conclude, is there anything else you would like to add, any reflections, experiences, or thoughts that you feel are important but have not yet been discussed?
3. Once again, I deeply appreciate your time, trust, and willingness to participate. Your contribution is vital in helping us better understand and address these issues within ROTC programs.

APPENDIX B

TRANSMITTAL LETTER



Misamis University
Ozamiz City
College of Criminology



August 23, 2025

VIRGILIO H. ONGANIZA, PhD
NSTP Director
H.T. Feliciano St, Ozamis, 7200
Ozamiz City, Misamis Occidental

Dear Dr. Onganiza;

Greetings of Peace!

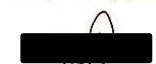
We, the Bachelor of Science in Criminology students of Misamis University, Ozamis City are currently working on our Thesis entitled, **"A Case Study on Physical Harassment Encountered by Reserve Officers' Training Corps Cadets Advanced Officer"** as a requirement for the course Criminological Research.

In this regard, we humbly request your good office to allow us to conduct face-to-face interview with the ROTC Officer under your headquarter. Be assured that informed consent will be secured from the participants before the actual interview and the data to be gathered will be used solely for research purposes.

Your approval of this request will contribute to the success of our educational endeavors.
For inquiry, you may contact us on this member 09700390215

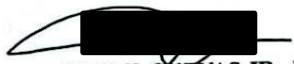
God bless and more power.

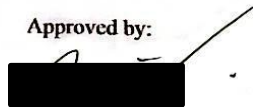
Respectfully yours,


JEYPEE B. ADE
Group Leader

Noted by:


MARKDY Y. GRONG, DIT
Instructor


JOSE F. CUEVAS JR., PhD
College Dean

Approved by:

VIRGILIO H. ONGANIZA, PhD
NSTP Director

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION

Officer 1

I am currently 22 years old and a 3rd year student taking up Criminology at Misamis University. Within the ROTC program, I am serving as an Advanced ROTC Officer. My responsibilities include leading cadets during training, assisting in the planning of activities, and ensuring discipline within the ranks. Being in this role has given me the opportunity to develop my leadership, communication, and decision-making skills. It has also helped me grow in confidence and maturity both as a student and as a future professional. I have been serving as an Advanced ROTC Officer for about 3 years. What motivated me to pursue this role was my desire to gain leadership experience and to serve as a role model to my fellow cadets. I also wanted to challenge myself physically, mentally, and emotionally while balancing my academics and training. The ROTC program provides a unique environment where I can practice discipline, responsibility, and teamwork. My motivation also comes from the belief that the values I learn here will prepare me for my chosen profession in the future. Yes, I have observed situations that may be considered as physical harassment, especially when punishments or physical training go beyond reasonable limits. At first, I felt conflicted because discipline and strict training are normal in the ROTC environment. However, I also realized that there is a clear boundary between discipline meant for growth and actions that could harm cadets physically or emotionally. These experiences made me reflect on the importance of maintaining professionalism and respect while still instilling discipline. I believe addressing these concerns will make the training more effective, safe, and beneficial for everyone. I have experienced forms of physical harassment such as excessive push-ups, long periods of strenuous drills, and sudden punishments that seemed unnecessary. Sometimes, these actions were used as a way to instill discipline but felt more like abuse than proper training. It made me question if the intention was really to develop us or simply to assert authority. While discipline is part of ROTC, I realized there should be limits. These experiences shaped how I now view leadership and training practices. During those moments, I felt humiliated, exhausted, and sometimes even discouraged. It created stress and fear instead of building confidence and discipline. Afterward, I often reflected on whether the treatment was fair or excessive. Sometimes I felt stronger after enduring it, but other times it left me with doubt. Overall, it was a mix of resilience and frustration. These situations occurred occasionally, especially during intense training periods or when higher officers wanted to impose strict discipline. They were not present in every activity, but enough to leave an impact on my experience. It usually happened during corrections or punishments for minor mistakes. Though not frequent, the memory of those incidents stays strong. This shows how even a few instances can have lasting effects. I believe participants experience physical harassment because of the traditional mindset that toughness can only be built through extreme discipline. Some higher officers may think it is the fastest way to gain respect and obedience. Others might repeat what they themselves experienced during their own training. There is also a culture of hierarchy that makes it difficult for cadets to question such actions. This cycle continues

unless addressed properly. I think it happened because I was still learning and made mistakes in drills or tasks. Sometimes it was also because officers wanted to test our endurance and discipline under pressure. Another reason could be the culture of passing down the same treatment they once received. It was not always personal, but more about the system. However, it still left me questioning if it was the right way to lead. I felt intimidated and pressured, as if my worth as a cadet was being judged solely by my ability to endure. It was both physically and emotionally draining. There were moments I wanted to quit, but I also knew giving up was not an option. At the same time, I learned to control my emotions and push through. Despite the difficulty, it strengthened my resilience but also left scars of doubt. It affected my well-being by adding stress and sometimes lowering my self-esteem. There were times when I carried the pressure into my academics, making it harder to focus. As a leader, it made me more cautious in dealing with cadets because I do not want to repeat the same harsh methods. It also taught me the value of discipline with respect and fairness. Overall, it shaped me to become a more understanding officer. At first, it lowered my motivation because I felt discouraged by the harsh treatment. However, in the long run, it made me more determined to prove that I could lead differently. It gave me confidence to apply leadership with balance firm but not abusive. I realized that motivation grows stronger when cadets are guided, not harassed. This mindset inspires me to lead in a more positive way. I cope by reminding myself of my purpose in ROTC and focusing on the lessons I can take from the experience. Talking with fellow officers and friends helps me release the stress and regain strength. I also balance my time with academics and personal activities to avoid burnout. Rest and reflection are important in recovery. Most importantly, I use the negative experience as motivation to be a better and fairer leader.

Officer 2

I am 21 years old, currently in my 4th year as a Criminology student. In the ROTC program, I serve as an Advanced ROTC Officer, holding the position of S3. My duties involve supervising cadets, assisting in drills, and helping organize training schedules. This position has given me the chance to improve my leadership and teamwork skills. It has also allowed me to grow more disciplined and responsible in balancing school and ROTC life. I have been serving as an Advanced ROTC Officer for almost 4 years now. What motivated me was my interest in leadership and the challenge of testing my limits through military training. I also wanted to contribute to the development of my fellow cadets by setting a good example. The values of discipline, service, and responsibility strongly inspired me. This role became a stepping stone for both personal growth and future career readiness. Yes, I have witnessed situations that could be considered physical harassment, like overly harsh punishments and long endurance activities. At first, I thought they were part of normal training, but later I realized some of them went beyond what was necessary. It made me reflect on how discipline should be properly applied. My initial thought was that cadets deserve respect while still being trained to be tough. These experiences taught me the importance of creating a balance between strictness and fairness. Some forms I experienced included repetitive strenuous exercises, being shouted at in front of others, and being forced to endure extended drills. These actions were often labeled as part of discipline, but they sometimes felt excessive. At times, it caused both physical strain and emotional stress.

While I endured it, I questioned if there were better ways to train. These experiences remain vivid because of their strong impact on me. While it was happening, I felt pressured and anxious, as though I had no choice but to endure it. Afterward, I sometimes felt proud that I survived the challenge, but I also carried doubts about its fairness. There were moments of frustration because it felt unnecessary. Other times, I took it as a lesson in resilience. The feelings were mixed, ranging from empowerment to discouragement. They do not happen in every training, but they occur enough to be remembered. These situations usually appear during the more intense phases of the program. Sometimes it was triggered by small mistakes or late responses. Although not daily, the thought of it happening again caused tension among cadets. Even occasional exposure can create a lasting impact on one's perspective. I think participants experience it because of the belief that hardship will produce strong, disciplined cadets. Some officers may also use it as a way to establish authority. Another reason is the tradition of passing down the same treatment they once received. It happened to me mainly because of mistakes I made during drills or lapses in performance. At times, I think it was also about proving myself under pressure. Some of it might have been directed at testing my limits as an officer. In other cases, I felt it was not personal but rather a system everyone had to go through. It made me realize how easily discipline can turn into harassment. I felt both fear and determination at the same time. Fear because of the humiliation and physical strain, but determination because I didn't want to appear weak. It was mentally draining but also sharpened my endurance. The experience gave me strength but also left me cautious. It taught me the importance of resilience but also the need for fairness in leadership. It sometimes caused stress and fatigue, which carried over to my academic life. There were moments when my focus in class was reduced because of exhaustion from training. However, the experience also motivated me to manage my time better and build a stronger mindset. As a leader, it made me avoid using extreme discipline on cadets. Instead, I became more focused on encouragement and balanced correction. At first, it lowered my motivation because I doubted myself as an officer. But later, it boosted my confidence since I realized I could endure tough situations. It gave me the drive to lead in a way that prevents others from experiencing the same discouragement. My confidence now comes from showing fairness and respect to cadets. This motivates me to lead with both firmness and empathy. I cope by focusing on the positive lessons instead of the negative feelings. Talking with peers and mentors helps me process my experiences. I also practice self-care, like resting and keeping up with my studies, to balance the pressure. Reflection helps me transform the hardship into motivation. Over time, I recover by using the experience as fuel to be a better leader.

Officer 3

I am 22 years old and currently in my 4th year of college. At present, I hold the position of an Advanced ROTC officer in our unit. My duty mainly focuses on assisting in drills, supervising cadets, and supporting different training programs. I have been serving as an advanced officer for 4 years. My motivation came from the desire to challenge myself in leadership and discipline. I also wanted to be a role model to younger cadets and help them grow in the program. Yes, I have observed instances of physical harassment in the program. My initial thoughts were that such practices may push cadets too far and cause discouragement. I believe discipline can still be instilled in a way that respects the dignity

of every cadet. Some forms I experienced were being required to perform intense exercises repeatedly, verbal scolding combined with physical tasks, and long hours of standing under the sun. These situations often went beyond normal training. They felt more like punishments than learning opportunities. During these moments, I felt physically drained and mentally pressured. I sometimes doubted my decision to take the officer role. However, I also realized that overcoming these hardships made me more determined to continue. They usually happened during critical inspections, field training exercises, or when mistakes were committed. While not daily, they occurred enough to become a common part of the training experience. The frequency depended on the activity and the strictness of the supervising officers. Participants undergo this because it is viewed as a method of enforcing toughness and strict discipline. It is also sometimes used to correct mistakes and test perseverance. In a way, it reflects traditional military culture passed down through generations. In my case, it happened because of lapses in performance and as part of testing my endurance as an officer. I also believe that being in a leadership role meant I was held to higher expectations. The treatment was both a form of discipline and a challenge to prove my capability. I felt embarrassed at times, especially when it happened in front of my peers. It created self-doubt and frustration. Yet, it also gave me the drive to improve and avoid repeating mistakes. It caused stress and sometimes disrupted my concentration in academics. Physically, it left me exhausted after training, which affected my routine. Still, I learned how to adapt and manage responsibilities despite the pressure. At first, it lowered my motivation because I felt that the treatment was unfair. Later on, it became a source of strength as I understood the importance of fairness and empathy in leadership. I became more confident by learning from those negative experiences. I cope by practicing self-care, balancing rest with study and training. Talking with trusted peers and seniors also helps lighten the burden. In the long run, I use the lessons from these experiences to become a better leader.

Officer 4

I'm currently 21 years old and taking up my 4th year in college. Right now, I'm serving as an Advanced ROTC officer in our unit, holding the position of Company Commander of Alpha Company. My role allows me to handle responsibilities like leading formations, assisting in drills, and mentoring cadets. I've been serving as an advanced ROTC officer for almost 4 years. What motivated me was my passion to serve, my desire to test my limits, and to develop myself as a leader. I also wanted to inspire others, just like how I was inspired by my seniors before. Yes, I have observed some situations where cadets experienced physical harassment during tough training sessions. At first, I honestly felt uneasy and questioned if those actions were really necessary. Over time, I realized that discipline can be taught without crossing the line, and respect should always come with leadership. The forms of physical harassment I experienced include excessive physical punishments such as prolonged push-ups, extended drills, and strenuous exercises beyond what was necessary for training. These actions were often implemented as corrective measures for mistakes. They sometimes went beyond discipline and bordered on unnecessary physical strain. During the experience, I felt exhausted, discouraged, and questioned my capacity to endure the training. Afterward, I also felt a sense of relief and realization that I was able to withstand the challenge. Despite the hardship, it strengthened

my mental and physical resilience. These situations occurred occasionally, particularly during high-pressure training days or inspections. They were not part of the daily routine but were frequent enough to leave lasting effects. The instances usually arose when discipline enforcement or performance corrections were emphasized. Participants often experience these situations because some instructors or leaders consider harsh methods as necessary for discipline and toughness. It is also influenced by a tradition of strictness passed on in military training environments. In many cases, it is perceived as a way to test commitment and endurance. I believe it happened primarily due to mistakes or lapses in following commands and drills. It was also a means to test my limits as an officer and evaluate my ability to endure pressure. Additionally, the hierarchical structure of ROTC training sometimes perpetuates such practices. I felt uncomfortable and disheartened while experiencing it, as it created both physical and mental strain. At the same time, it challenged me to remain composed under pressure. The experience made me reflect on the fine line between discipline and unnecessary hardship. Physical harassment has at times negatively impacted my well-being, causing fatigue and stress. It also interfered with my academic performance by limiting my ability to concentrate after rigorous training. Nonetheless, it compelled me to strengthen my time management and resilience. Initially, it reduced my motivation and confidence, as the pressure was overwhelming. Over time, however, I reframed the experience as an opportunity to learn how to lead with fairness and empathy. It ultimately improved my confidence in handling cadets, as I understood what approaches should and should not be applied. I coped by focusing on rest, self-reflection, and maintaining a balance between academics and ROTC duties. Engaging with peers who shared similar experiences also helped alleviate the burden. Most importantly, I used the challenges as lessons to improve myself as both a student and an officer.

Officer 5

I am 21 years of age and currently in my 3rd year of study at Misamis University. My present role is being an Advanced ROTC officer. This position allows me to handle responsibilities such as guiding cadets, assisting instructors, and helping in unit activities. I have been serving for almost 4 years now. My motivation came from my desire to build discipline and leadership skills that will benefit me in the future. I also wanted to take part in meaningful service to both my school and community. Yes, I have observed some situations that could be considered physical harassment. My first thought was that these actions sometimes go beyond proper training. It made me realize the importance of balancing discipline with respect for cadets' well-being. I experienced being pushed to do repetitive exercises, enduring extended marching drills, and sometimes being shouted at while doing physical tasks. These were physically and mentally demanding. They often felt more like punishment rather than training. I felt pressured and tired during the activity. Afterward, I felt a mix of frustration and accomplishment for being able to endure it. The experience gave me both struggle and strength at the same time. These situations do not happen every training day, but they appear in certain high-stakes situations. They are more frequent during inspections or drills with stricter officers. The occurrence depends on the type of activity and the leaders in charge. Participants go through this because some leaders see it as part of building character. It is also rooted in the belief that hardship creates stronger soldiers. Tradition in military-style training makes it a common practice. I think

it happened to me as a consequence of mistakes during commands and drills. It also served as a test of how far I could endure physical and mental stress. Another reason is that as an officer, I was expected to meet higher standards. I felt uneasy and sometimes demotivated. The pressure was difficult to handle, especially when it happened repeatedly. Still, I chose to take it as part of my growth in ROTC. It affected my health by leaving me exhausted and stressed. At times, it limited my ability to focus on academics after training. On the positive side, it also trained me to be more resilient. At first, it lessened my motivation because I questioned whether such treatment was necessary. But over time, I used the experience to understand the kind of leader I want to be. It gave me more confidence to lead with fairness and understanding. I cope by resting properly and managing my time between academics and ROTC. Sharing experiences with my peers also helps me feel supported. Most importantly, I focus on the lessons I learned instead of the negativity of the experience.

Officer 6

I am 22 years old, currently in my 4th year of college. I serve as a Platoon Leader in the Advanced ROTC program at my university. My responsibilities include training cadets, ensuring discipline, and helping manage weekly drills. I've been in the Advanced ROTC program for almost two years now. I joined because I've always admired the values of discipline, leadership, and service. I also wanted to challenge myself physically and mentally while preparing for a possible future in the armed forces. Yes, I've witnessed and experienced certain situations during training that I would consider physical harassment. These included forced excessive push-ups, slaps during disciplinary actions, and even being physically dragged into formation as a form of punishment. At first, I thought it was just part of the training, but later I realized that some actions crossed the line between discipline and abuse. I experienced being slapped lightly on the face for failing to respond to a command quickly. There were also times we were forced to do physical exercises beyond safe limits like over 300 push-ups without rest as a form of punishment.

Officer 7

I am currently 21 years old, a 3rd year Criminology student, and serving as an Advanced ROTC Officer in Misamis University. At my previous position, I am holding the position of Color Officer. I have been serving as an advanced ROTC officer for almost two years. What motivated me is my passion for leadership, discipline, and the desire to serve as a role model for my fellow cadets. I also wanted to challenge myself and enhance my skills in leadership, management, and resilience. Yes, I have observed situations that could be considered as physical harassment, especially during intense trainings where excessive punishments were imposed. At first, I thought it was a normal part of military training, but later I realized that some actions already go beyond discipline and may affect cadets physically and mentally. These experiences taught me to reflect on the importance of discipline with responsibility and the need to ensure that training remains constructive and safe. Some forms of physical harassment I experienced include excessive push-ups, prolonged strenuous exercises, and punishments beyond reasonable limits, even when mistakes were minor. During those moments, I felt exhausted, pressured, and sometimes

demoralized, but after reflecting, I used the experience as motivation to endure and become stronger. Such situations occurred occasionally, especially during the early stages of training like COCC (Cadet Officer Candidate Course), but they became less frequent as I progressed to higher leadership roles. Participants usually experience this because of strict discipline enforcement, leadership testing, or traditional military practices passed down by senior officers. Sometimes it is also due to misinterpretation of authority by trainers or cadet officers. I believe it happened because of the culture of strict military discipline and the belief that physical hardships can build toughness and resilience. It was also a way to test our patience, endurance, and loyalty to the ROTC program. I felt frustrated and physically drained, but at the same time I saw it as a challenge to prove my capability and perseverance. It taught me the value of endurance, although I also realized the importance of having limits. Experiencing physical harassment affected me both positively and negatively. At first, it caused stress and fatigue that sometimes interfered with my studies, but it also built my resilience, mental toughness, and discipline. As a leader, I became more conscious of balancing strictness with fairness when dealing with my subordinates. It strengthened my motivation and confidence because I realized that if I endured those hardships, I can also inspire my cadets to persevere but in a way that promotes discipline with respect. I cope by practicing time management, seeking support from my peers and mentors, maintaining physical fitness, and reflecting positively on the lessons learned from the experience. I also make sure to separate training discipline from unnecessary harassment whenever I lead my own cadets.

Officer 8

I am 21 years old, a third-year Criminology student, and I currently serve as the S4 or Logistics Officer in the ROTC unit. My responsibilities mainly involve handling supplies, uniforms, and the overall logistics support needed for training activities. I have been serving as an advanced ROTC officer for about one year and four months. I was motivated to pursue this role because I wanted to experience leadership in a more practical way through managing resources and ensuring that our unit has what it needs to function smoothly. I also wanted to contribute not just in drills but also in the behind-the-scenes work that keeps the corps moving. Yes, I have both seen and experienced instances that could be described as physical harassment, like unnecessary physical punishments during formations or prolonged standing even when cadets were already showing fatigue. My initial thought was that it was part of “toughening up,” but later I realized that there is a difference between discipline and harassment. It made me reflect that officers must uphold fairness and ensure that discipline does not become abuse. I have experienced being subjected to intense push-ups, long runs, and carrying heavy loads beyond what was necessary, even in situations where the punishment did not match the mistake committed. I felt frustrated and physically drained, but at the same time I also felt a sense of accomplishment after enduring it. It made me realize my body could withstand more than I expected. They occurred mostly during intensive preparation for inspections, evaluations, and during COCC training. As I advanced in position, the occurrences became less frequent. Cadets usually experience this because of the traditional military culture where physical punishments are used as a form of discipline, accountability, or to build toughness and unity among trainees. It happened to me partly because of group accountability, where

one person's mistake meant everyone had to share the consequence. As an officer, I also think it was a way of testing my endurance and leadership whether I could endure hardships and still perform my duties as S4. I felt challenged and pressured, but I also saw it as part of my development as a cadet officer. It taught me to stay calm, endure the pain, and finish what was asked of me despite the difficulty. It affected my well-being by causing temporary exhaustion that sometimes overlapped with my academic requirements. However, in the long run, it strengthened my discipline and endurance. As a leader, especially in logistics, it made me more mindful that discipline should always be paired with respect and concern for the welfare of cadets. It increased my motivation because I know how it feels to be pushed beyond limits. It gave me confidence to lead cadets with fairness ensuring discipline while also respecting their physical boundaries. I cope by resting properly, organizing my tasks early, and making sure I balance my responsibilities as an officer and as a student. I also recover by seeking support from fellow officers and reflecting on the purpose of why we endure these hardships to grow stronger and more capable as future leaders.

Officer 9

I am 21 years old, currently in my fourth year as a Criminology student, and I serve as the Battalion Commander of the ROTC unit. As the highest-ranking cadet officer, I am responsible for overseeing the entire battalion, ensuring smooth training operations, and guiding both the officers and basic cadets under my command. I have been serving as an advanced ROTC officer for over two years. My motivation to pursue this role came from my desire to lead at the highest capacity and to be a role model for my fellow cadets. I wanted to prove to myself and to others that leadership is not just about giving commands, but about inspiring, protecting, and guiding people responsibly. Yes, I have both experienced and observed situations that could be considered physical harassment. These included excessive punishments, prolonged strenuous activities, and disciplinary actions that seemed disproportionate to mistakes made. Initially, I accepted them as part of the tradition of military training. But as I grew into my role, I realized that leaders must distinguish between necessary discipline and harmful practices. My reflection is that training should strengthen cadets, not break them. I experienced rigorous physical punishments such as long runs under harsh conditions, carrying heavy loads, and repeated strenuous drills that sometimes felt excessive. During those moments, I felt physically and mentally strained, but afterwards, I also felt a sense of endurance and determination. It gave me lessons in patience and perseverance. They occurred frequently in the earlier phases of my ROTC journey, especially during the COCC phase, but became less common once I assumed higher leadership roles. Participants often experience this because of the traditional culture in ROTC training, where hardships are viewed as a test of loyalty, obedience, and resilience. Sometimes it is also caused by a misuse of authority, when punishments go beyond reasonable discipline. As a cadet, I think it happened to me as a test of character and leadership potential. The goal was to see if I could endure challenges and still rise to lead others effectively. I felt pressured, fatigued, and sometimes questioned my own strength, but in the long run, I took it as a challenge that prepared me for the heavy responsibilities of commanding an entire battalion. At first, it negatively affected my well-being since it caused fatigue, stress, and occasional difficulty balancing academics with

ROTC duties. But as time went on, I learned to manage stress and became stronger in both body and mindset. As a leader, it taught me to be empathetic yet firm, knowing that cadets need discipline, but also respect and care. It made me more confident and motivated because I know what hardships feel like, and I can use that experience to lead with fairness. I strive to set an example where cadets respect me not out of fear, but out of trust. I cope by practicing proper rest, reflection, and seeking advice from mentors and peers. I also remind myself of the bigger purpose ROTC is not just about hardships but about producing disciplined, capable, and principled leader

Officer 10

I'm 22 years old, a 3rd year Criminology student, and although I don't hold a staff position, I am tasked to supervise and guide cadets during training. I've been an advanced officer for almost 4 years. I was motivated because I wanted to help cadets learn discipline and teamwork while also improving myself as a leader. Yes, I have observed situations that could be considered as physical harassment, especially during intense training where excessive punishments were imposed. At first, I thought it was a normal part of military training, but later I realized that some actions already go beyond discipline and may affect cadets physically and mentally. These experiences taught me to reflect on the importance of discipline with responsibility and the need to ensure that training remains constructive and safe. My first thought was that it was just part of training, but later I realized that leaders should balance discipline with fairness. I've experienced Extra laps, push-ups, and prolonged standing. I felt exhausted but learned endurance and control. It happened mostly on strict training days. Participants may experience it because it is often seen as part of traditional military discipline. It happened to me due to drill errors or group mistakes. I felt discouraged at first but later took it as motivation to improve. It caused stress sometimes but helped me become stronger and more disciplined. It pushed me to be more confident in leading with fairness. I cope through rest, peer support, and focusing on my goals.

APPENDIX D

THESIS/RESEARCH DATA GATHERING APPROVAL FORM



Misamis University

Ozamiz City

MISAMIS UNIVERSITY RESEARCH CENTER

CERTIFIED: ISO 21001: 2018 Educational Organizations Management System by DNV
ACCREDITED: Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation (PACUCOA)

MU-RC-042/13 November 2024

Thesis/Research Data Gathering Approval Form

Date: August 13, 2025

Name of Authors: Jeypee B. Ade, Angelito Y. Anggam jr, Jayrel faith M. Iyog, Hiezel R. Atad
College/Department: College of Criminology
Research Title: A Case Study On Physical Harassment Encountered By ROTC Advanced Officers

Data Gathering Procedure:

a. Type of Research: (Kindly check)

☐ Quantitative	☒ Qualitative	☐ Experimental
☐ Approved Research Title & Problem/Objectives	☐ Approved Data Gathering Procedure	☐ Approved Data Gathering Instrument/Data Sheets

b. Respondents/Participants/Subject/Samples to be Collected: Approximately five (5) to ten (10) participants

c. Procedure:

☐ Survey	☒ Interview	☐ Experimentation	☐ Laboratory Testing
---------------------------------	---	--	---

d. Place of Implementation/Study Area: _____

If to be conducted outside the school campus, indicate the nature of transportation to be used:

☒ Own private vehicle	☐ public utility vehicle	☐ rental	☐ Others, please indicate _____
---	---	---------------------------------	--

e. Date/s of Implementation/Sampling: _____

Attachments:

☒	Approved Letter of Consent from the designated authority in the area/place where the study is to be conducted
☒	Signed Parents' Consent

The thesis proposal mentioned above is hereby recommended for the commencement of data gathering implementation.

Recommended by:

Prof. Teopisto Y. Culanag
Thesis/Research Adviser

Prof. Markdy Y. Orong
Thesis/Research Instructor

Approved by:

Dr. Jose F. Cuevas
College Dean

CONTROLLED DOCUMENT

APPENDIX E

INFORMED CONSENT FORM (PORMA SA NASABTAN NGA PAGTUGOT)

Name of the Researcher/Investigator: JEYPEE B. ADE, ANGELITO Y. ANGGAM, JAYREL FAITH M. IYOG, HIEZEL R. ATAD

Course: Bachelor of Science in Criminology

College: College of Criminology-Misamis University

Email / Contact Number: 09700390215

Thesis Title: **PHYSICAL HARASSMENT ENCOUNTERED BY ADVANCED OFFICER OF RESERVED OFFICER TRAINING CORPS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY**

PART I. INFORMATION SHEET	
Introduction (Pasiuna)	Good day! We are the principal researcher/investigator of the study entitled “Physical Harassment Encountered by Advanced Officers of Reserved Officer Training Corps: A Phenomenological Study.”

	We are students under the program <u>Bachelor of Science in Criminology</u> at Misamis University in Ozamiz City. I am to conduct the research with <u>ROTC AdvancedOfficers</u> as participants. In this vein, We are respectfully seeking your voluntary participation, being qualified to give your informed consent to take part in this study. Before you decide whether to participate or not in this study, please read the succeeding information about the study and feel free to ask questions anytime should there be anything you do not understand or want to clarify. If you agree to answer the interview, you will be asked to affix your name and signature on this form for which you will be given a copy. <i>(Maayongadlaw! Kami si Jeypee B. Ade, Angelito Y. Anggam, Jayrel FaithM. Iyog, Hiezel R. Atad, ang nagpahigayon sa pagtuonkabahin sa “Physical Harassment Encountered by Advanced Officers of Reserved Officer Training Corps: A Phenomenological Study.” Kami usa ka estudyante sa College of Criminology sa Misamis University. Kami nagapilikanimo isip participant nga maoymutubag sa gikinahanglangimpormasyonniininggihimongpagtuon. Kami matinahurongnaghangyo sa inyongbulontaryo nga pag-apilniini nga pagtuon. Gikinahanglan nga ikawnaa sa saktongedadugnaaykakayahan nga mohatag sa pagtugotaronmakaapilniini nga pagtuon. Sa dili pa ka mohukom sa pag-apilniini nga interview, palihug sa pagbasa sa mgaimpormasyon sa ubosuggawasnon ka nga makapangutanakonadunaywalanimonasabtan o gusto nimongiklaro.</i>
--	--

	<i>Kung motugot ka sa pagahimoon nga interview, papirmahon ka niini nga pormaughtagaan usab ka ugimongkaugalingongkopya.</i>
Purpose (<i>Katuyoan</i>)	The purpose of this study is to <u>examine and understand the lived experiences of an ROTC Advanced Officer who has encountered physical harassment.</u> <i>(Ang katuyuanniini nga pagtuonmao ang pagsusiugpagasabot sa mgakasination nga nasinati sa mga ROTC Advanced Officers nga nakasinati og pisikal nga pagpang- abuso.)</i>
Type of Research Intervention (<i>Matang sa Interbensyon sa Pagtuon</i>)	This study will be conducted through interviews. The gathering of data will be conducted in person. <i>(Kiningpagtuonpagabuhatonpinaagi sa interview. Personal ang pagkuha sa datos.)</i>
Selection of Participants (<i>Pagpili sa mga Partisipant</i>)	The selection of the participants is based on the following inclusion criteria: currently enrolled or have recently been active as advanced ROTC officers and they must have personally experienced or directly witnessed incidents of physical harassment in the ROTC program. <i>(Ang mgapartisipanteniini nga pagtuonmao ang indibidwal nga naga-angkon sa mosunod: Kasamtangangnaka-enrol o kamakailanlamang nga nahimongaktibo isip mga advanced ROTC officers ugkinahanglan nga silamismonakasinati o direkta nga nakasaksi sa mgainsidente sa pisikal nga pagpang-abusosulod sa ROTC program."</i>
Voluntary Participation (<i>Boluntaryo nga Partisipasyon</i>)	Your participation has to be voluntary and will not affect your situation or status in any way, including your relationship with the researcher. You are free to decide if you will take part or not. If you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any questions that you do not prefer to answer. <i>(Boluntaryo ang imongpag-apilugkinidilimakaapekto sa imongsitwasyon o estadoapilnaimongrelasyon sa nagtuon. Gawasnon ka nga modesisyon kung kungmoapil ka niini nga pagtoon o dili. Kung mo-desisyon ka nga moapil, gawasnon ka nga dilimotubag sa bisanasa nga pangutana nga dilinimo gusto nga tubagon.)</i>

Procedure (Pamaagi)	The participants will be given ample time when to undertake the interview. The interviews will be undertaken once or several times when necessary. The researcher will transcribe the interviews to be used for the analysis of the data. The information and data provided by you as a participant will be utilized for this study alone and will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. <i>(Ang mgapartisipantepagahatagan og igongpanahon sa pag-apil sa interview. Ang interview pwedenghimoonkausa nga higayon o sa makadaghandepende sa panginanghalanon. Isulat sa nagtuon ang interviews para sa pag-analisa sa datos. Ang mgaimpormasyonugdatos nga nakuhagikankanimo isip ka partisipantegamitonlamangniining research og hatagan og tumangpag-amping nga dilimabutyag.)</i>
Duration (Gidugayon)	The gathering of data through the interview will last for 5 to 10 minutes. <i>(Ang pagkuha sa datospinaagi sa interview mokabatngadto sa <u>5-10 minutes.</u>)</i>
Risks and Discomforts (Risiko ug Kahasol)	The respondents will be protected from physical, social, or economic risks. In case the items in the survey instrument are too personal and make you feel uncomfortable, you may decline to answer any or all questions and may terminate your involvement at any time you choose. <i>(Ang mgapartispnateginaprotektahan sa pisikal, sosyal o ekonomikanhongrisgo. Kung pananglitanadunaymgapangutana nga personal rakaayo o kung dili ka komportable, mamahimongdili ka motubag o mobalibad sa pagtubag sa bisanasa o sa tanangmgapangutanaugmoatras sa pag-apil sa bisanunsangpanahon nga imong gusto.)</i>
Benefits (Kaayohan)	This study will enable you to shed light or provide understanding about the experiences of ROTC advanced officers in relation to physical harassment. Thus, your responses shall be highly valued being deemed important in the field of military training, education, and leadership development. <i>(Kini nga pagtuonmakapahimokanimopaghatag og katin-awan o pagpasabotkabahin sa kasinatian sa mga ROTC advanced officers kabahin sa pisikal nga pagpang-abuso. Ang imongmgatubag hatagan og dakongbili nga giisip nga importante sa linya sa military training, edukasyon, ugpagpalambo sa pangliderato.)</i>

Reimbursements (Hulip nga bayad)	There will be no monetary expenses or costs on your part as a respondent, nor any monetary compensation for your participation in this study. However, personal protective equipment (PPE) like face masks, alcohol and face shields may be provided during the gathering of the research data. <i>(Wala kay magasto sa imongpag-apilniini nga pagtuonugdili usab ka bayaranugkwarta sa imongpag-apilniini nga pagtuon. Apanadunay nga personal protective equipment (PPE) sama sa face masks, alcohol ug face shields nga pwede nga mahatag sa panahon sa pagkuha sa mgadatos)</i>
Confidentiality of Data (Pag-amping sa Datos)	Only the researcher will have access to the information and responses of the participants. The personal identifying information of the participants will only be used for research analysis and will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. During the study, all data will be kept in a locked, secure filing cabinet, of which will be discarded 6 months after the publication of the results. <i>(Ang nagtuonlamang ang makakita sa mgaimpormasyonugtubag sa respondents. Ang mgadatos nga makuhai-analisaug hatagan og tumangpag-ampingarondiliibutyag. Sa panahon sa pagtuon, ipahimutang sa usa ka selyadong filing cabinet ang tanangdatos nga pagagub-on human sa 6 kabulangikan sa pag-publish sa resulta.)</i>
Sharing of Findings (Pagpaambit sa Nakaplagan)	The results of this study will be presented during the thesis/dissertation final defense of the researcher. Also, the research findings may be shared through publications and conferences with the assurance that the identities of the respondents will remain confidential. A printed copy of the completed study will be provided to the participants. <i>(Ang mgaresultaniini nga pagtuonipresenta sa panahon sa final defense sa thesis/ dissertation sa nagtuon. Ang mganakaplagan sa pagtuonposible nga ipaambitpinaagi sa mga publications ug conferences nga adunaykapanigurohan nga dilimabutyag ang pagkatawo sa mgapartisipante. Pagahatagan og isa ka giimprinta nga kopya sa kumpleto nga pagtuon ang mgapartisipante.)</i>
Rights to Refuse or Withdraw (Katungod sa Pagpalibabad o Pag-undang)	You are free to withdraw or terminate participation at any stage of the study, without the need to give any reason. You will not be penalized in case of termination of participation. <i>(Gawasnon ka nga moatras or moundang sa pag-apil sa bisanasa nga punto sa pagtuon nga dilinamagkinahanglan pa ugrason. Dili ka ipamulta sa pag-atras o pag-undang.)</i>

Who to Contact (Kinsa ang Kontakon)	Should there be any queries as a parent, you can contact the researcher through the following details: <i>(Kung adunaymgapangutana, mamhimo nga mokontakpinaagianingmgadetalye:)</i> Name of the Researcher (Ngalan sa Nagtuon): <u>JEYPEE B. ADE, ANGELITO Y.ANGGAM, JAYREL FAITH M. IYOG, HIEZEL R. ATAD</u> Cellphone Number/s: <u>09700390215</u> e-mail ad: <u>jeypee.ade@lsu.edu.ph</u> STATEMENT BY THE RESEARCHER (PAGPADAYAG SA NAGTUON) I will read the Information sheet to the potential participant. With the best of my ability, I make sure that the participant will understand the interview questions and that possible follow-up interviews may be undertaken. <i>(Akongpagabasahon ang mganasulatniining Information Sheet ngadto sa potensyal nga partisipante. Kutob sa akongmahimosiguroonnako nga masabtan sa partisipante ang mgapangutana sa interview ug ang possible nga follow-up nga interviews.)</i> I can assure that the participant will be given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions raised will be answered fully. I can likewise assure that the participant will not be coerced into giving consent that must be free and voluntary. <i>(Gisiguro ko nga ang partisipantemahatagan og panahon sa pagpangutanakabahinniiningpagtuon og ang tanangpangutana nga iyanggihatagmatubag sa hingpit. Siguroon ko usab ang maong partisipantedilimapugos sa paghatag sa pagtugot nga kinahanglan nga gawasnon og boluntaryo.)</i> A copy of this Informed Consent Form will be provided to the participant. <i>(Ang kopya sa niining Informed Consent Form ihatagngadto sa respondent.)</i> Print Name of Researcher (Ngalan sa Nagtuon): <u>JEYPEE B. ADE, ANGELITO Y.ANGGAM, JAYREL FAITH M. IYOG, HIEZEL R. ATAD</u>
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PART II. CERTIFICATE OF CONSENT

This research entitled “PHYSICAL HARASSMENT ENCOUNTERED BY ADVANCED OFFICER OF RESERVED OFFICER TRAINING CORPS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY” by Jeypee B. Ade, Angelito Y. Anggam, Jayrel Faith M. Iyog, R. Atad with the aim of gathering information and data pertaining to physical harassment encountered by ROTC advanced officers, has been presented and explained to me clearly. Since the involves ROTC Advanced Officers, I am chosen as one of the participants.

(Kini nga pagtuongitituloan, “PHYSICAL HARASSMENT ENCOUNTERED BY ROTC ADVANCED OFFICER OF RESERVED OFFICER TRAINING CORPS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY” niJeypee B. Ade, Angelito Y. Anggam, Jayrel Faith M. Iyog, R. Atad, nga adunaytumong sa pagkuha og impormasyonugdatoskabahin sa a case study on ph harassment encountered by ROTC advanced officers, gipresentauggipasabot og klarokanako. Tungo ang pagtuon kay kabahin sa ROTC Advanced Officers,akonapilian isip usa sa mgapartisipante.

I have read the foregoing Informed Consent Form, or it has been read to me. I had the opportunity to ask questions, which were subsequently answered fully. I consent voluntarily to be a participant of this

(Akongnabasa ang nauna nga Informed Consent Form, o gibasakinikanako. Natagaanako og higayon nga makapangutana nga natubag sa hingpit. Ako mosugot nga boluntaryo nga mahimong participant sa niiningpagtuon.)

Print Name of Participant (Ngalan sa Partisipante): _____

Signature of Participant (Pirma sa Partisipante): _____

Date: [MM/DD/YYYY]_____

If Illiterate (Kung dilimakasulatugmakabasa)

If the respondent is illiterate, a witness who is literate will sign. The respondent will choose him/ he who is without connection with the researcher or the research group to attest this undertaking respondent will affix his thumb print.

[Kung ang participant kay dilimakabasa o makasulat, mopirma ang usa ka makabasaugmakasulatestigo. Ang respondent ang mopilikaniya nga walaykoneksyon sa nagtuon o sa iyanggrupomopamatuod sa gimbuhaton. Ang respondent mobutang sa iyangtaml (thumb print)].

Name and Signature of the Witness
(NgalanugPirma sa Testigo)

Thumb mark

APPENDIX F

PARENTS CONSENT

	MISAMIS UNIVERSITY Ozamiz City Department of Student Affairs & Services
---	--

MU-DSAS-006/02June2026

PARENT'S CONSENT

Sponsoring Group/Organization

I am allowing my son/daughter/ward, Jeypee B. Ade, to join the research Data gathering (activity) to be held on August 11 to September 20 at Misamis University, Ozamiz City under the supervision of _____ (Adviser/Faculty).

I understand that Misamis University exercises the necessary safety precautions in this activity.

In consideration of the benefits to be derived from the above activity, I expressly waive any and all claims against the administration or any member of the faculty and staff of the Misamis University on account of any unforeseen accident or injury that my son/daughter/ward might incur in connection with the aforementioned activity.

JENIEU B. ADE
Signature over printed name of
Parent/Guardian

7-10-25
Date

Jeypee B. Ade
Signature over printed name of
Student

7-10-25
Date

Important: This form shall be submitted to the DSAS Office at least two (2) days before the conduct of the activity.

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me, this ____ day of 05 MAY 2026 Ozamiz City, Philippines, that the herein affiant personally came and appeared with his/her _____, as evidence of his/her personal identity.

Doc. No. 201
Page No. 50
Book No. XII
Series of 20 16

ATTY. REY D. BINAB, RMT
Notarial Commission No. 2025-18
Notary Public for Ozamiz City and Clarin
City Hall Drive, Bernad Subdivision, Aguada, Ozamiz City
PTR No. 6007751; 01/05/2026; Ozamiz City
IBP O.R. No. 576165; 12/29/2025; Pasig City
Attorney's Roll No. 70648
H/CLE Compliance No. VIII-0014127; Valid until 04/14/2028

Notary Public
Until _____
PTR No. _____
IBP No. _____
TIN No. _____
Roll No. _____

APPENDIX G

DOCUMENTATION



In-depth interview conducted with ROTC Advanced Officer to explore lived experiences of physical harassment



ROTC Advanced Officers who served as key informants in the qualitative study on physical harassment



Actual fieldwork involving the collection of qualitative data within the ROTC training environment



On-site data gathering conducted within the ROTC Training environment and the completion of data gathering activity with the cooperation of ROTC Advanced Officers

APPENDIX H

CERTIFICATE OF PUBLICATION



Mediterranean Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences

| Website: www.mjbas.com | Quarterly International Journal | Email: mjbaseditor@gmail.com |
| ISSN: 2581-5059 | Impact Factor: 5.999 | Ref. No.: MJBAS/2026/579384 |

Certificate of Publication

This is to certify that

Jose F. Cuevas, Jr.

Has published an article entitled

**A Case Study on Physical Harassment Encountered by ROTC
Advanced Officer**

In

Volume 10, Issue 1, January-March 2026

Mediterranean Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences





Mediterranean Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences

| Website: www.mjbas.com | Quarterly International Journal | Email: mjbaseditor@gmail.com |
| ISSN: 2581-5059 | Impact Factor: 5.999 | Ref. No.: MJBAS/2026/579384 |

Certificate of Publication

This is to certify that

Teopisto Y. Culanag

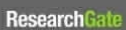
Has published an article entitled

**A Case Study on Physical Harassment Encountered by ROTC
Advanced Officer**

In

Volume 10, Issue 1, January-March 2026

Mediterranean Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences



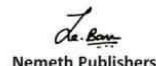
Certificate of Publication

This is to certify that
Jeypee B. Ade
 Has published an article entitled
**A Case Study on Physical Harassment Encountered by ROTC
 Advanced Officer**
 In
Volume 10, Issue 1, January-March 2026
Mediterranean Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences



Certificate of Publication

This is to certify that
Angelito Y. Anggam
 Has published an article entitled
**A Case Study on Physical Harassment Encountered by ROTC
 Advanced Officer**
 In
Volume 10, Issue 1, January-March 2026
Mediterranean Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences



Certificate of Publication

This is to certify that

Jayrel Faith M. Iyog

Has published an article entitled

**A Case Study on Physical Harassment Encountered by ROTC
Advanced Officer**

In

Volume 10, Issue 1, January-March 2026

Mediterranean Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences



Certificate of Publication

This is to certify that

Hiezel R. Atad

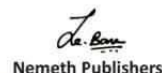
Has published an article entitled

**A Case Study on Physical Harassment Encountered by ROTC
Advanced Officer**

In

Volume 10, Issue 1, January-March 2026

Mediterranean Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences



APPENDIX I

TURNITIN RESULT

Page 2 of 76 - Integrity OverviewSubmission ID: 28447137877626

14% Overall Similarity

The combined total of all matches, including overlapping sources, for each database.

Filtered from the Report

- Bibliography

Match Groups

- 104 Not Cited or Quoted 11%**
Matches with neither in-text citation nor quotation marks
- 30 Missing Quotations 2%**
Matches that are still very similar to source material
- 0 Missing Citation 0%**
Matches that have quotation marks, but no in-text citation
- 6 Cited and Quoted 1%**
Matches with in-text citation present, but no quotation marks

Top Sources

- 8% Internet sources
- 2% Publications
- 10% Submitted works (Student Papers)

Integrity Flags

0 Integrity Flags for Review

No suspicious text manipulations found.

Our system's algorithms look deeply at a document for any inconsistencies that would set it apart from a normal submission. If we notice something strange, we flag it for you to review.

A flag is not necessarily an indicator of a problem, however, we'd recommend you focus your attention there for further review.

Page 2 of 76 - Integrity OverviewSubmission ID: 28447137877626

CURRICULUM VITAE



PERSONAL DATA

Name : JAYREL FAITH M. IYOG
Date of Birth : March 20, 2004
Place of Birth : Lopez Jaena Misamis Occidental
Civil Status : Single
Home Address : Purok 3, Western Poblacion, Lopez Jaena
Contact No : 09164926631
Email : faithiyog@gmail.com

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

College : Bachelor of Science in Criminology
Misamis University
Ozamiz City
December 2026
Secondary : High School Diploma
Misamis Occidental National High School
Oroquieta City
2022
Elementary : Elementary Diploma
Lopez Jaena Central School
Purok 1, Western Poblacion, Lopez Jaena
2016

SEMINARS/TRAININGS ATTENDED

- Advanced Officer Training Course
Misamis University, Ozamiz City
2022-2026

- Seminar-Workshop in Dactyloscopy
Misamis University, Ozamiz City
November 18, 2023
- Enhancing Commitment, Adaptiveness, and Positive Values
Misamis University, Ozamiz City
May 25, 2023
- Mental Health and Wellness Seminar
Misamis University, Ozamiz City
April 06, 2024

CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL DATA

Name : ANGELITO Y. ANGGAM
Date of Birth : October 2, 2003
Place of Birth : Aurora, Zamboanga Del Sur
Civil Status : Single
Home Address : Purok 6, Poblacion, Clarin
Contact No : 09682860084
Email : angelitoanggam@gmail.com



EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

College : Bachelor of Science in Criminology
Misamis University
Ozamiz City
June 2026

Secondary : High School Diploma
Aurora National High School
Balidi, Aurora Zamboanga del Sur
2022

Juan Lumosad Memorial National High School
Mahayahay, Aurora, Zamboanga del Sur
2020

Elementary : Elementary Diploma
Tagulalo Elementary School
Tagulalo, Aurora, Zamboanga del Sur
2016

SEMINARS/TRAININGS ATTENDED

- Reserved Officers Training Course
Misamis University, Ozamiz City
2022-2023

- Seminar-Workshop in Dactyloscopy
Misamis University, Ozamiz City
November 18, 2023
- Water Search and Rescue Training
Misamis University, Ozamiz City
December 12-16, 2025
- Effective Communication in Action: Skills and Strategies
Misamis University, Ozamiz City
February 20, 2026
- Seminar on Police Report Writing
Misamis University, Ozamiz City
February 27, 2026

CURRICULUM VITAE



PERSONAL DATA

Name : JEYPEE B. ADE
Date of Birth : May 2, 2003
Place of Birth : Can-Avid, Eastern Samar
Civil Status : Single
Home Address : Purok 9, CatadmanManabay, Ozamiz City
Contact No : 09700390215
Email : jeypee.ade@lsu.edu.ph

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

College : Bachelor of Science in Criminology
Misamis University
Ozamiz City
June 2026

Secondary : High School Diploma
Ozamiz City National High School
Ozamiz City
2022

Elementary : Elementary Diploma
Can- Avid Central Elementary School
Borongan City
2016

SEMINARS/TRAININGS ATTENDED

- Reserved Officers Training Course – Medical Unit
Misamis University, Ozamiz City
2022-2023

- Seminar-Workshop in Dactyloscopy
Misamis University, Ozamiz City
November 18, 2023
- Water Search and Rescue Training
Misamis University, Ozamiz City
December 12-16, 2025
- Effective Communication in Action: Skills and Strategies
Misamis University, Ozamiz City
February 20, 2026
- Seminar on Police Report Writing
Misamis University, Ozamiz City
February 27, 2026

CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL DATA

Name : HIEZEL R. ATAD
Date of Birth : March 24, 2003
Place of Birth : Upper Pulot, Ozamiz City
Civil Status : Single
Home Address : Purok 4A, Dimaluna Ozamiz City
Contact No : 09154527501
Email : atadhiezel24@gmail.com



EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

College : Bachelor of Science in Criminology
Misamis University
Ozamiz City
June 2026

Secondary : High School Diploma
Pulot National High School
Ozamiz City
2022

Elementary : Elementary Diploma
Dimaluna Elementary School
Ozamiz City
2016

SEMINARS/TRAININGS ATTENDED

- Advanced Officer Training Course
Misamis University, Ozamiz City
2022-2026

- Seminar-Workshop in Dactyloscopy
Misamis University, Ozamiz City
November 18, 2023
- Enhancing Commitment, Adaptiveness, and Positive Values
Misamis University, Ozamiz City
May 25, 2023
- Mental Health and Wellness Seminar
Misamis University, Ozamiz City
April 06, 2024