

# The Integrity of the Royal Malaysian Police: A Thematic Analysis

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## ABSTRACT

Integrity is crucial in enforcement agencies, especially the Royal Malaysian Police (RMP), to ensure accountability in accordance with the law, free of misbehaviour or corruption. People have recently expressed frustration over the rise in police wrongdoing, which is concerning given several high-profile examples in the country. As a result, the objective of this study is to reveal the level of public trust in RMP's integrity and why this scenario still never-ending stories. This study uses qualitative methodologies, specifically thematic analysis, to delve deeper into the perspectives of individuals and practitioners. The results of the study are as expected, which is that the people are highly upset and disturbed about the increasing number of misconduct instances among police officers. However, a few informants report that the degree of integrity in RMP is still under control, with only a few examples of wrongdoing in Malaysia. Nonetheless, the findings of this study can serve as a precedent for RMP to be more transparent and fairer in its investigation of members in inquiry. Measures to improve human resource management, such as self-reinforcement training, a more appropriate wage system, and the addition of adequate workers, can help to prevent RMP misconduct and promote public trust. Researchers can expand future studies by using a variety of approaches and involving informants from various Malaysian enforcement authorities.

**Keywords:** Public, Trust, Integrity, Police, Malaysia

## INTRODUCTION

The Malaysian government recognises the role of the public sector as an administrative and management agency. To prevent wrongdoing such as fraud, integrity practices are applied in every department of the public sector. In the 1980s, the government implemented a strategy known as 'Clean, Efficient, and Trustworthy' to replace the Anti-Corruption Ordinance 1950 and the Anti-Corruption Act 1961, with the goal of preventing corruption and improving the public integrity practices of various agencies at all levels. Malaysia wants to achieve developed country status by the year 2030, although the public sector in Malaysia is a matter of concern to the public due to ongoing incidences of inefficiency, fraud, and corruption (Johari et al., 2020; Nafi & Kamaluddin, 2020; Sajari et al., 2019). Integrity can contribute to governance failures, fraud, inefficiency, and corruption, particularly in the public sector (Abdullah, Daud, & Hanapiyah, 2020; Johari et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2021; Nafi & Kamaluddin, 2020). Malaysia's corruption score is 7.6, lower than the global average of 7.8. (A score of ten implies no corruption at all). This signifies that Malaysian organisation are still involved in current corruption in both the public and private sectors (Corruption Performance Index, 2020). Corruption costs the government 5% of its GDP per year (NST, 2018). The examples above are only a handful of the numerous flaws discovered in public sector administration that reflected the integrity of enforcement authorities in Malaysia. This has caused people to question the public

sector and the necessity to manage public money accurately and honestly while exercising the values of integrity, accountability, and responsibility with the application of proper governance methods in the delivery of services in the public sector. According to Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) corruption complaint statistics from 2013 to 2018, the public sector accounts for 63.3% of all complaints received. Of the total, 75.39% were complaints about procurement, enforcement, licencing, and permits. Investigation statistics throughout the year 2019 related to corruption among civil servants also show that enforcement agencies are at the top for the number of investigations opened, which is 119 out of 480 complaint cases, while enforcement agencies are also responsible for the number of arrests, which is 172 out of 463 arrests, and enforcement agencies are also in first place for the number of charges which is 49 out of 145 charges (Zahari, Said & Muhamad, 2021).

According to MACC figures from 2019, the public is increasingly concerned about the integrity of enforcement authorities, especially RMP. The views of these respondents represent Malaysians in general, and the results of this study provide insight into the integrity of police officers, who are more distrusted and contribute to RMP's negative image (Global Barometer 2021). Royal Malaysian Police (RMP) created Jabatan Integriti dan Pematuhan Standard (JIPS) on July 25, 2014, as the 9th department (RMP, 2022). However, conducting investigations into abuse of authority and wrongdoing by officials and members presents its own set of challenges. Furthermore, JIPS confronts challenges in gaining assistance from public or independent witnesses to conclude the inquiry, even though some were initially eager to testify but later changed their views for personal reasons or stated that they had never been contacted. There are situations where complaints are incomplete and do not clearly provide data on the person concerned, as well as cases where insufficient evidence to start an investigation, for example, a letter without identification of the sender, no subject information, no information about the type of offense committed and so on (RMP, 2022). Due to these constraints, JIPS finds it difficult to undertake a full investigation following a complaint. JIPS cannot investigate if there is no fundamental information about an offence or a violation of the code of conduct. As a result, the public or anyone who registers a complaint and includes basic information in the complaint throws the finger at the RMP with the dubious phrase "No Further Action". JIPS, under RMP, performs integrity tests to measure the level of integrity or compliance of police officers and personnel in the field, particularly in 'hotspot' assignments to combat corruption (RMP, 2022). The number of complaints against RMP reported between 2011 and 2020 indicates that substantial attention is required because the increasing of complaints demonstrate poor integrity, and the public is dissatisfied. The tendency of increasing the number of inquiry documents registered for wrongdoing among Police officer also rose. Only 60 instances were documented in 2012 but the number is increasing to 197 cases in 2019. The public's faith in RMP for crime prevention is only 53%, and the Security Perception Index survey fell from 47.5% in 2011 to 39% in 2014 (Rashid et al., 2017). Poor service delivery in RMP has resulted in a lack of accountability, efficiency, and equity in policy formulation. Given the importance of RMP playing a vital role as a law enforcement agency in Malaysia as well as their contribution to national security and development, the performance, commitment, and job satisfaction among police officer is always a national priority.

JIPS also stated that since 2013, a total of 607 members have been fired from the police service while 240 have been suspended. As of 2020, RMP had fired 25 officers. A total of 38 senior officials are being investigated and another 301 members are being investigated for drug-related offences, crimes, corruption, and misconduct (RMP, 2020). The number of cases involving police personnel increased significantly between 2019 and 2020, which concerns the public. There have been no cases of misbehaviour among top police officers in two years. However, the increase in instances among junior police officers is very large, from 2 incidents in 2019 to 21 cases in 2020. In 2019, there were only two dismissal cases: one for drug charges and one for disciplinary reasons. In 2020, a total of 7 junior police officers were terminated due to disciplinary cases followed by 6 cases due to drugs, 4 criminal cases, 2 instances each for corruption and court convictions demonstrating a considerable and highly concerning increase (RMP, 2020). Several questions arise, including to what extent and reason for the increase in occurrences of misbehaviour among

Malaysian police officers. What factors can influence the police officers' integrity? Are the efforts of JIPS, Enforcement Agency Integrity Commission (EAIC), and established misconduct-related institutions inefficient or weak in terms of enforcement and punishment? Looking at this question, there is much more that can be done to improve the image of police officers in the country. Since the impacts of police misbehaviour are getting more serious, it is vital to perform a study to examine the level of integrity in RMP. As a result, the purpose of this study is to look at the level of public trust in integrity. This study is expected to assist RMP in its efforts to improve integrity practices and enhance RMP's public image.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Many previous studies define integrity as closely related to ethics and the 'Code of Conduct' (Brown, 2005; Kaiser & Hogan, 2010; Robbins & Judge, 2014) and in areas such as human resource management, organisational behaviour, psychological foundations, and leadership (Codreanu, 2019; Mitchell et al., 2017; Tasoulis, Kreppa, & Stewart, 2019). Integrity is essential in the public sector for promoting transparency and accountability (Alam et al., 2018; Johari et al., 2020). Hoekstra and Kaptein (2021) stated that management plays a significant role in establishing organisational integrity. Integrity is believed to directly influence organisational activities and decisions (Treviño-Rodríguez, 2007). Many studies have found that integrity is essential for providing good customer service, or the best possible service to the public (Alam et al., 2018; Robinson & Dowson, 2011). Integrity in public administration, such as the police, refers to 'honesty' or 'reliability' in carrying out official tasks while avoiding 'corruption' or 'abuse of authority' (Armstrong, 2005). Integrity is an indicator of trust, efficiency, professionalism, and the public's confidence in police personnel to carry out their tasks, particularly those concerning security (Akir, 2012). Each individual must have a criterion of integrity in order for police officers to maintain discipline, obey severe laws and regulations, and be accountable for their activities. Many studies suggest that integrity among public sector personnel, particularly among police officers, is required for them to provide effective services to the public and prevent them from acting outside of their duties (Codreanu, 2019; Mitchell et al., 2017; Tasoulis, Kreppa, & Stewart, 2019). This is because unless they respect the standards of ethics and integrity, everything they do would be weak.

Employee integrity is critical in order for an organisation to prevent police officers from becoming involved in incidents of untrustworthiness, corruption, abuse of power, and other fraud. Many studies also agree that leaders with a high level of integrity will help the police avoid unethical behaviour (Alam et al., 2018; Robinson & Dowson, 2011). Akir (2012) found that the idea of integrity is divided into three (3) dimensions: prevention, accountability, and enforcement. Another study by Bird (2006) discovered that there are some disparities in personality qualities that result in variations in integrity among civil servants, which can be recognised by different job fields and scopes of work. Previous research has also shown that individuals with high integrity usually have high intellectual capacity, such as being calm, cheerful, and having broad interests, whereas people with low integrity are reported to have unconventional thought processes, are involved in personal problems, and have thoughts that are less mature when making decisions. (Hales et al., 2015; McDowall et al., 2015). As a result, the attitude of civil servants, particularly police officers, who employ physical and mental power more than other civil servants, receives a lot of attention. Furthermore, the public becomes the eyes and ears of police officers on duty, making it easy to file complaints that can harm the police force's image and integrity in general. Mathenge (2014) discovered that ethics and integrity have a significant impact on corruption cases in the Kenya Police Agency, and a questionnaire was issued to 150 police officers in Kenya to assess the level of integrity among officers. This study suggests that strong enforcement by organisations to uphold the level of integrity among police officers, such as providing ethics classes, training, and reviewing officer behaviour, as well as creating a culture of high professionalism in the police department, can deter police officers from engaging in fraudulent behaviour. The argument over enforcement is frequently linked to civil servants' integrity in providing services, which has piqued the interest of numerous past studies by researchers (Alam et al., 2018; Robinson & Dowson, 2011). The

problem of the integrity of enforcement is very significant, especially in taxation, because it has a significant relationship between the government and the local community, management, and relationship with the higher government administration such as the state government and local government. (Porter et al., 2015; College of Policing, 2014). Implementing enforcement integrity is a frequently discussed problem in industrialised countries (Erakovich & Kolthoff, 2016; Jiménez, García-Quesada, & Villoria, 2014). Thus, the study argues that it should be given considerable consideration in emerging nations such as Malaysia, which are dealing with political and socioeconomic uncertainties that have a direct impact on the image and integrity of government officials. In this regard, a study defines integrity as providing confidence to the society by continuously defending a set of beliefs or principles and honouring promises (Quinton et al., 2015). As a result, those who practise integrity can be viewed as continually adhering to pledges, ideals, and positive values.

## MATERIALS AND METHOD

The researcher decided on a qualitative data collection method called thematic analysis. It facilitates the dissemination of more in-depth study findings to the public and enforcement practitioners. Non-probability sampling through purposive sampling is appropriate for use as a tool to collect data among informants because only informants among practitioners who are closely related to integrity among RMP officers are suitable as the unit of analysis for this study, such as Bukit Aman JIPS officers, who are three informants followed by two EIAC officers. A total of 5 informants were chosen to provide feedback on the integrity of the RMP from the eyes of the public, who were assigned to group B. The interview session lasted 30 minutes and was performed in two groups utilising the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) approach. It was conducted face-to-face and took four weeks to collect all the interview data, which was estimated to take 30 minutes to 60 minutes, while three weeks were required for the interview process with public informants from Group A in Kuala Lumpur, which took 30 minutes for each group divided into female and male informants during 3 months of interview sessions. Ethical approval was given by the authority for selection of informants.

## FINDINGS

Researcher chosen 10 informants among practitioners and the public to assess public trust in RMP integrity practices from multiple perspectives. The results of the Second FGD among the public can be seen to help bolster the assertion made in the First FGD among practitioners, who indirectly show that the study's conclusions are transparent and holistic. The informants are of diverse races, and the selected informant's range in age from 30 to 50 years old. They were interviewed in Bukit Aman and at the EAIC headquarters. The FGD interview process was carried out from mid-March to July 2022 to collect data from the field. Demographics of the First FGD informant, which included five policemen and practitioners in the field of RMP integrity. Four (80%) of the informants are male, one (20%) is female, and five (80%) are married, with one (20%) being single. There are two informants aged 30-35 (40%), two informants aged 36-40 (40%), and one informant aged 41 to 50 (20%). Three informants (60%) are Malays, one (20%) is Chinese, and one (20%) is Indian. In the first FGD, three (60%) informants represented JIPS, two (28.4%), and two (40%) represented EAIC officers. A total of 3(60%) informants are Muslim whereas 1(20%) represent the Buddhist religion and 1(20%) represent the Hindu religion. The demographics of the informants among the public are 5 persons. Three (60%) informants are male, while two (40%) are female. There are 4(80%) informants with marital status followed by 1(20%) who are single while a total of 3(60%) informants are between the ages of 25-30 followed by 1(20%) representing the age of 31-40 and 1(20%) informants represent the age of 41-50. There is 1(20%) informant with an SPM background while a total of 2(40%) represent informants from Diploma graduates and a total of 2(40%) represent informants with a bachelor's degree education. Three (60%) informants were Malay, with one (20%) representing Chinese and one (20%) representing Indians. Three (60%) of the informants worked in the public sector, while two (40%) were from the private sector. A total of 3 (60%) informants are Muslim followed by 1 (20%) Buddhist and 1 (20%)

Hindu. All informants in the First FGD thoroughly recognised the concept of integrity in uniformed forces, especially enforcement entities such as RMP that play a key role in maintaining security and providing protection to the people. All informants concur that the level of integrity among RMP members is still high from the eyes of the public.

Although there are examples of misconduct among FGD members, they are still in small numbers and a few informants consider that the public still trust and believe in the integrity of RMP in carrying out their tasks. However, this scenario cannot be allowed to exist and needs to be given significant consideration by the RMP because it will provide a negative image to the administration. The First RMP makes this explicit in the following statement:

*"I, as one of the officers in JIPS, admit that there are cases of misconduct among RMP members, there is indeed an increase in terms of the number of cases but in my view, it is still under control... And I still believe that the people still trust and believe in RMP in carrying out duty... Maybe cases of members being fired but the number is very small... The police are also ordinary people who do not run away from doing wrong and it is not fair to blame the RMP completely if there is a case of misconduct among the members, we at JIPS are always fair and transparent in carrying out investigation".*

(Informant A)

*" I also agree with my friend's view that the integrity of the RMP is still high among the people... without RMP, the people know how the security and protection in the country is like... and I'm sure the people also know that we too are human beings who are sometimes careless or negligent in carrying out our duties , but it does not mean that the RMP does not take action, even if there are cases of misconduct among members, it is in a small amount and the number of members who were fired is very less... Me myself as part of this team see that the integrity of the RMP is still good in the eyes of the people."*

(Informant B)

*" Yes, I agree with other friends that integrity is a guide for us to work properly and trust...there will be a small number of wrongdoers who need to be brought to investigation under JIPS and it is a normal thing in life as an employee or staff who have a case of misconduct will be taken to a disciplinary case... It was quite serious because we are RMP members who are law enforcement agencies... it is quite sensitive and becomes a question among the community... Those who enforce the law but also those who do wrong is always what I hear from the people.... Going back to the attitude and principles of life of a member is not the same and there will be a few who will commit wrongdoing and it somewhat undermines the image of RMP in the eyes of the people."*

(Informant C)

*"In my opinion, who is involved in the EAIC, which is the Enforcement Agency Integrity Commission, it is undeniable that the RMP is the highest contributor to misconduct cases compared to other members of the enforcement bodies, and the integrity of the RMP is very important in the eyes of the people compared to other government agencies... it is because the RMP body which is most important in maintaining the safety and protection of the people, even though there are a small number of cases of misconduct among RMP members compared to the total members out there, still the people are a little wary of the integrity of the RMP."*

(Informant D)

*"Yes, I clearly understand the meaning of integrity plus involving the RMP... Of course, it becomes annoying if cases are increasing even on a small scale, but it indirectly gives a bad image to the enforcement body..."*

*as someone involved in EAIC, yes, it is true that the RMP is at the top in cases of misconduct and receiving the highest number of complaints compared to other enforcement agencies... However, for me, the way the RMP members themselves are faced with physical and mental instability, open to danger and the risk of causing a case of misconduct seen by many among PDRM officers compared to Immigration or Customs members... they are also ordinary people."*

*(Informant E)*

The Second FGD among the public also agrees with the views expressed by the First FGD. All informants are clear and understand the meaning of integrity and how it affects PDRM. Most informants still believe and think that there are cases of misconduct among the Police Officers but should not affect others to perform accordingly. It is The Second Group of FGD among the public also agrees with the views expressed by the First Group of FGD. All informants are clear and understand the meaning of integrity and how it affects RMP. A few informants were quite vocal in blaming RMP members who are increasingly involved in cases of misconduct, and they think it should not be involved as law enforcers and enforcement. It is clear to see through statements like below:

*" I understand the meaning of integrity... have to follow the work guidelines well... have work principles and know the difference between what is good and bad for our work... in addition, if you work as a police member, you have to take care of the RMP image... you have to have the confidence to do the right job... with high integrity...yes, there may be cases of misconduct or some members are subject to disciplinary action, but that does not mean that the image and credibility of other RMP members are also weak....usually there are good and some not good, straying from the track will end up in the disciplinary committee...where any agencies is there but because RMP is different, its image and integrity are very strong... the people are always aware."*

*(Informant A)*

*" Yes, I understand the meaning of integrity and for me in any job I need to have integrity as well if as a trustee of the people as an executor of the law... But I still believe that the level of integrity of RMP is still good among the people... without RMP how we would live.... cursing or criticizing no matter what, when in trouble you have to go to the Police Station, plead for help and so on, and there are still many RMP officers throughout Malaysia performing their duties regardless of day or night."*

*(Informant B)*

*"I know integrity and I think the RMP has done its job well... being a member of an enforcement body is not an easy task and it is difficult, of course we as ordinary people have the nature that encourages wrongdoing to happen... the same way the members are not exempt from investigation even if they themselves carry out law enforcement law. If convicted, the punishment will be given to the member and in my opinion, it will not affect the integrity of RMP in general."*

*(Informant C)*

*"I think the integrity of the RMP is getting weaker... the people are also wondering when there are more cases of misconduct and arrests increasing from year to year... recently there was a case I read in the newspaper where the head of the Police Station was arrested for accepting bribes ...for me it's a shame and it tarnishes the image of RMP...maybe only a few cases but if left alone it will become a cancer and a parasite in RMP...and I think the investigation is not carried out transparently at the RMP level...I have never seen RMP's statement about the actions taken or the resolution of the investigation on members to public knowledge... Does the RMP protect their members when they are brought to order?"*

*(Informant D)*

*"Yes, I agree with my friend earlier... Being a member of the RMP is not necessarily immune from punishment if found guilty... if the RMP is serious and has integrity, there should be a need to be a clear mechanism in conducting investigations and making announcements so that the people know when a case of misconduct occurs, it is not immune from investigation and fair punishment to all parties... we know that human being are normal and cannot escape from committing mistakes, but the implementation method seems to be silent and not publicized... if it is publicized then surely the people will see RMP with integrity... more confident and no element of bias."*

*(Informant E)*

The above comments represent the results of the first and second FGDs, and they clearly illustrate that the majority of informants believe the RMP still has integrity in carrying out its tasks. The people continue to believe and trust in RMP as a protector of their security and well-being. There may be a few informants who dispute RMP's technique of dealing with cases of misconduct among RMP members, which appears weak and ineffective, but from another perspective, RMP, through JIPS and EAIC investigations, has its own means of dealing with misconduct situations. The findings of this study are also consistent with the findings of previous research conducted by Klockars et al. (2018), who found that the integrity of law enforcement bodies is still viewed in high regard despite of wrongdoing among their members. This is because a small number of misconduct incidents do not provide an accurate picture of other members who are still functioning effectively and with integrity. It was also noted by Price (2020) and Punch (2019), who stated that people have no choice but to trust law enforcement authorities in a country because they are the country's supporters and trustees in maintaining security and giving the best safety to its citizens.

This thesis is also seen to be successful in obtaining research findings that answer the second objective of investigating how organizational culture affects the integrity of PDRM. Researcher looked at the results of the First PKB among practitioners in parallel with the results of the Second PKB which consisted of the public. All of these factors have a significant influence on the practice of integrity in PDRM. Various reactions and views from the informants are translated by the researcher according to the informant's statements according to themes or variables which are factors that have been stated in the objectives of the study. The findings show a clear influence between organizational culture in influencing integrity in PDRM. The view from the First PKB which is from the JIPS and EAIC Officers clearly shows that the work culture in uniformed bodies and enforcement agencies is an important basis for integrity in the workplace. It was expressed by the informant through the following statement:

*"Yes, I agree with PDRM's own organizational culture which own style of integrity among members...The slogan of Clean, Efficient and Trust has become a guide in PDRM's work culture... It is to ensure that members are clean from corruption and wrongdoing, but we cannot control their behaviour of hundreds of thousands of PDRM members to have integrity... everything lies in how the PDRM culture permeates the heart of that person who makes the members on the right track."*

*(Informant A)*

*"I agree that the work culture in the PDRM itself determines integrity or not... and being a member who carries out an enforcement function does not exempt them from being punished the same as members in other enforcement bodies if found guilty... and I feel that the culture of the PDRM organization forms the identity of police officer...maybe because of the work culture that is always in danger and risk with an uncertain environment causing some members to lack integrity..."*

*(Informant B)*

*"A work culture that requires physical and mental strength, fatigue factors and perhaps a standard of living that is not balanced with the income earned contributes to cases of misconduct among members...this is my*

*experience due to aim with quick money by accepting bribes, gambling, involved in drug cases and so on is because of feeling pressured by the work culture in enforcement agencies that demand energy and uncertain time."*

*(Informant C)*

*"I admit that the culture of the PDRM organization which requires strictness and discipline in carrying out duties may be one of the factors that affect the integrity among PDRM members.... I also must admit that there are a few who are stressed and stressed by the workload, especially those who work in the fieldwork demanding mental strength and physical...members who are weak and lack integrity will easily make mistakes.... not all, but the work environment in the field sometimes makes members forgetful and easy to fall into cases of misconduct."*

*(Informant D)*

*"Yes, I agree that organizational culture has a strong influence on PDRM members... due to law enforcement agencies, of course our organizational culture needs to be firm in enforcement, discipline, strict and trustworthy which is the pillar of integrity for PDRM members... but behind the organizational culture, there may be those who are depressed over time and take an attitude that does not support the law that needs to be implemented correctly and take the easy way out...sooner or later they will be caught and investigated."*

*(Informant E)*

A quote from the informant of the Second FGD among the public also acknowledged the organizational culture of the RMP as the most important law enforcement body as one of the strong factors affecting the integrity of the RPM. It is clearly stated as below:

*" I agree with the organizational culture of the RPM as a determinant of integrity or not among their members... A firm, highly disciplined culture is a measure for the RMP in carrying out its duties to the people... if there is no firmness how will we follow the law... if there is no trust, clean and efficient, how should the RMP deal with all kinds of human behaviour that can happen out there...maybe there are those who cannot follow the rules of the RMP, will be the ones who misbehave...normally as human beings there will be those who follow the right path and vice versa."*

*(Informant A)*

*"I think all members of the RMP should know the culture of the organization that determines their integrity...if the work period involves physical and mental strength...you can't make excuses for taking bribes or doing wrong...as an enforcement member you can't run away if you don't have integrity...wrong is still wrong and RMP's organizational culture for me is correct, strictness, high discipline, clean, efficiency and trust reflect how integrity should be present in members...whichever is weak don't blame the organizational culture, blame yourself for not having integrity in work ...don't blame fieldwork in crowded places or work pressure...you should know at the beginning of the application how the culture of the RMP organization shapes the integrity of its members."*

*(Informant B)*

*"Yes, organizational culture plays an important role in shaping the integrity of the RMP...the decades-old slogan, I think everyone knows Bersih, Kekap dan Amanah... it is clear that as an enforcement member, the RMP needs to be firm wherever they are on duty...if they are not firm, how will the people follow the rules and laws? if you abuse that power, you cannot run away...if you are wrong, you must be punished because of*



*your own attitude and not the RMP culture that caused the member to have a case of misconduct....the fragile identity is the cause of everything that can happen."*

*(Informant C)*

*"The culture of the RMP organization is good for me... It's just that some policemen are easily tempted by quick money... not all... only a small number do not have integrity and blame the culture as pressure for them to do wrong... maybe it's a tired factor... the work is uncertain... have to be patient with the passion of the people but that is the salt and pepper as an enforcement member that for me needs to be taken care of and respected... and maybe also if there is misconduct, the Police are also ordinary people, there will be days of unstable emotions that make them act outside the scope of work."*

*(Informant D)*

*"Yes, I agree with everyone's statement... PDRM's organizational culture is good and in line with the slogan Clean, Efficient and Amanah which builds integrity among members, but it cannot be denied that there are some Police officers who take advantage as law enforcers by violating the scope and scope work...It all lies in our own hearts...if it doesn't suit well, stop and give the opportunity to those out there who are interested and serious about becoming members of the RMP."*

*(Informant E)*

After looking at the findings through the First and Second FGD the organizational culture in the RMP is one of the main factors affecting integrity among RMP members. A strict organizational culture alongside the slogans Bersih, Cekap and Amanah is seen as complementing integrity in the RMP. Maybe a few involved in the misconduct case blame the work culture that is always in risk and danger and the uncertain environment, but it cannot be used as a ticket as an enforcement member acting outside the scope of duty. Most informants similarly stated that if it happens, it is their own will and the culture of the PDRM organization is already beautiful in the eyes of the people. Any enforcement agency in the world emphasizes an organizational culture that is firm, disciplined and upholds the law without compromise. The work environment that exists drives the enforcement personnel to be on the right track. This finding was also found by Porter et. al., (2015) who stated that a rigid organizational culture with rules and laws in the enforcement body is normal because the image of law enforcement in the eyes of the people needs to have integrity.

## **DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION**

Overall, the study's purpose was met, and most of the informants were pleased with the RMP officers' degree of integrity. The data reveal that several factors may contribute to officer honesty. Most informants felt that RMP have good integrity, however few did not in certain tones. There may be a few informants among the public who believe that the RMP's integrity has been harmed by the increased number of examples of integrity disclosed on social media. However, most of the public still has a positive image of the RMP's integrity in carrying out its tasks. Complaint cases are insignificant in comparison to the number of PDRM members nationwide who maintain their integrity. There may have been blunders and instances of misbehaviour, but it cannot be concluded that the RMP's integrity is deteriorating. The results of RMP's interviews with officers and the public show that all informants still believe in RMP's honesty, and that closely associated parties such as JIPS, EAIC, and MACC should be more transparent in dealing with RMP member wrongdoing. The possible explanation for this is that RMP did not take steps to reveal the enquiries or any integrity matters involving their members to the public, which contributed to misleading. It is critical to build public confidence and trust in RMP. The public was perplexed about the seemingly silent consequences of their knowledge. However, the media frequently highlights instances of wrongdoing among

RMP members. The public is still curious about how the inquiry will proceed and, if found guilty, what type of penalty the RMP will impose. The findings also revealed that the public does not dispute an increase in incidences of wrongdoing among RMP members. Nonetheless, it is still under control, and the inquiry at the JIPS level and allied agencies such as the EAIC and MACC is being conducted transparently. Most informants among RMP practitioners believe that because the investigation method is hidden from public view, the investigation process is not transparent and there is some protection for RMP members. These sources from police officers deny that the investigation of misconduct charges is conducted in a proper and impartial manner. Perhaps the long and closed process from social media prevents the public from having an incorrect perception of the verdict against RMP members who have committed misbehaviour. As a result, the time has come for the RMP's participation in the inquiry process to be more transparent and open to the public, allowing the level of integrity to be seen more clearly and publicly.

### **Implications for the security policy, protection, and justice system of the country**

There is no denying that incidences of misbehaviour among members of enforcement agencies, including the RMP, are on the rise, indicating that integrity is under threat. It may not be as terrible as MACC (2023) claims, but government organisations such as RMP and the Road Transport Department (RTD) ignored up to 553 cases of misbehaviour. Although the MACC identified just 125 cases of misconduct against the PDRM, some cases of misbehaviour have been under investigation for 12 years with no progress. The MACC also observed that the RMP appeared to reject the MACC's recommendations in resolving allegations of wrongdoing among its members. It is a shocking statement with severe consequences for people's confidence. People are concerned that the RMP's national security and protection agenda is off course. MACC's assertion was rejected by RMP, who indicated that the reported case was investigated, and it might be because it took a long time, implying that RMP did not thoroughly investigate it. However, when the MACC's statement regarding misbehaviour incidents in Malaysia is broadcast on social media, it undermines people's trust and confidence in the country's security and protection policies. The statement can be interpreted in a variety of ways, indicating that people are more concerned about how the security enforcement body and public safety appear to be opaque. When the national security and protection systems are compromised, the national justice system suffers significantly. The people will witness the integrity of law enforcement authorities, particularly the RMP, deteriorate, creating opportunities for injustice to occur. People's perceptions of the country's justice system are becoming increasingly negative as more and more believe that being a member of the RMP will make it easier to commit wrongdoing because they are enforcement officers, and that if convicted, the "Blue Code" will be widely practiced without the people's knowledge. The government cannot take people's perceptions lightly, as they can have a harmful impact on the national judicial system. It is like a cancer that people covertly lack respect for institutions that serve to uphold justice at all levels of society. The government must act promptly if further statements like "So the police in Malaysia are immune from punishment," "Those who enforce the law and those who break the law," or "The police have a 'cable' or 'link', of course they can be released if found guilty" are made. It demonstrates that people are becoming increasingly frustrated as examples of wrongdoing multiply, and that at the conclusion of the investigation, the concept of justice for all is not upheld.

### **First recommendation**

RMP must consult with MACC's feedback, which recognises the necessity for a transparent and open system for the public on RMP's integrity. In order to increase integrity, cases of member misbehaviour must be handled transparently, and the MACC's recommendations taken into account. The transparent investigation process must be made public so that there are no more issues or questions about cases of wrongdoing in the RMP, and people understand that the RMP fulfils its duty with complete justice regardless of position or status. RMP must make every effort to monitor the status of investigation cases so that cases that take a long time, up to being reprimanded by MACC, are considered more seriously. The JIPS in RMP is sufficient to

carry out its tasks in internal investigations into member wrongdoing. Those procedures and processes must be more methodical, impartial, and conducted in a timely manner. It is critical for the public to understand that the RMP is serious about improving the integrity of its members and restoring its image, which has been slightly tainted by the misbehaviour case.

### **Second recommendation**

Regular training and development in the process of improving RMP integrity must be implemented successfully. The study's findings, which show that cases of misconduct are increasing, even in small numbers, should concern the RMP, who, as the highest national security enforcement body, must devise a training and identity development mechanism that is appropriate for the environment as an increasingly challenging enforcement member. The use of modules that are effective and relevant to the responsibilities and scope of work in the field, which contribute to instances of easy misconduct in the RMP must be refined. Physical and mental strength must go hand in hand, and this should be emphasised in the policing course's strengthening module, so that the appropriate values and attitudes lead to workplace honesty. The researcher concluded that there is no consistency in the monitoring process of misconduct investigations in RMP and investigations conducted by agencies connected to misconduct among enforcement organisations such as EAIC and MACC. A recent press statement from the MACC revealed the fragility and non-uniformity of investigative monitoring, which lasted more than 12 years and resulted in no decision by the RMP. As a result, the MACC believes that the RMP does not appear to care about the integrity of members who have committed misbehaviour, and that this has a negative impact on the RMP's overall image. This time-consuming inquiry process has an indirect impact on RMP's cooperation relationship with relevant agencies. RMP through JIPS in managing the investigation of misconduct cases must also be more open and comprehensive in the methodology of the investigation carried out, and every effort should be made to avoid the usage of 'blue code' during the process.

### **Implications for the image of law enforcement bodies**

Looking at MACC's recent statement on RMP, it appears that MACC's indifference for 125 cases of misbehaviour among RMP personnel has harmed RMP's reputation and integrity as Malaysia's highest law enforcement organisation in the eyes of the public. People are beginning to wonder if the RMP is purposely delaying the inquiry process or if the monitoring system has long-standing flaws. It has a negative impact on RMP's reputation for preserving security and upholding the slogan "Clean, Efficient, and Trustworthy". People have also expressed concerns about the monitoring system that has been implemented thus far. The RMP cannot blame the people if they believe the investigation was conducted behind closed doors to cover up and protect the case among the members, because there is no evidence or public disclosure of the implementation of the misconduct case under JIPS.

### **First recommendation**

The first idea for increasing the level of integrity in the RMP is to encourage cooperation among the parties involved, including members of enforcement agencies such as the EAIC, MACC, and IIM. With comprehensive cooperation across the agencies concerned, the RMP's investigation process can be directly facilitated, saving the government time, energy, and money when dealing with situations of wrongdoing among enforcement agency members. RMP, on the other hand, must participate when relevant agencies issue reprimands since it identifies vulnerabilities that must be corrected, and the process of enhancing RMP's integrity will be more transparent and fairer.

### **Second recommendation**

The time has come for the RMP to form its own commission, the Ombudsman, to deal with accusations of misbehaviour among members, as JIPS increased responsibility from a committee to a commission with a

broader scope and purpose. Currently, JIPS only serves as a committee with a few members, but it performs a lengthy and difficult investigation process that necessitates a more systematic work team under a commission inside the RMP. JIPS, within the restrictions of scope, energy, and time, must deal with situations of misconduct among RMP members of varying categories. The issue of time restrictions among the committee, which led the inquiry process to take so long, did not occur due to the large scope and field.

## CONCLUSION

The survey found that all informants provided comments and constructive views on the level of integrity practices at RMP. Although integrity practices remain high, all informants believe that comprehensive responses to misconduct situations, no matter how few there are, should be addressed seriously. This is because it can have an impact on the integrity and credibility of RMP, Malaysia's highest enforcement authority. Following the release of the study's findings, various implications emerge. The ramifications for the RMP's governance and image as a law enforcement entity will continue to raise questions in the community. If the integrity of the RMP is still called into question, it has an impact on young people's perceptions of the country's future. As a result, the researchers' ideas are intended to assist the government in its attempts to improve the integrity of RMP. People must have great hopes and trust in RMP to improve the country's image in the eyes of the community and the rest of the globe. There are some research limitations in this thesis that somewhat affect the data collection process in the field. Because the informants among RMP members who are in Bukit Aman only have erratic and unpredictable working hours, it is quite difficult to collect data according to the scope of the study. The researcher's second limitation is the limited number of variables used, which contributes to a smaller scope than many variables investigated in earlier studies. The final limitation discovered in this study is the use of solely qualitative methods, which is quite limited when compared to the use of a combined mode of quantitative and qualitative, which can create more in-depth research, discussion, and conclusions. As a result, experts believe it is necessary to broaden the scope of future investigations on RMP integrity conducted by other academics. Future researchers may examine a broad reach that includes numerous informants and respondents. A wide scope involving many informants and respondents may be considered by future researchers. The use of diverse independent variables from the context of management and transparency may not only be limited to RMP, but the scope can be expanded to other enforcement bodies such as Immigration, Customs, and other public agencies in the context of evaluating integrity practices in the public sector in Malaysia.

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