

Abstract

In April of 2003, the Taipei County Police Bureau originated a “mounted police squad”, to take the responsibility of “sightseeing police force” with a mission statement to protect the well being in tourist areas. The establishment of the mounted police squad impacted the conservative bureaucratic system of the regular police force. Even though neither the system nor its horse-riding techniques made it favourable to maintain its existence, it has been almost four years since its establishment. From tourist attractions to staged performances, these mounted policemen dressed in red have always been the main attraction that awed its audience. The meaning of the “mounted police squad” inspired the purpose of this research: to better understand the anticipation and expectations people have of the mounted police squad as well as how it affects the image of the regular police force.

Based on the objective mentioned above, we conducted a survey on tourists and residents of the tourist areas. The participants were asked to rate the images of the mounted police and the regular police forces by taking a questionnaire designed for the average population. Based on this population, we investigated the significance of the difference and relationship between the ratings for the two police groups. A total of 400 questionnaires were returned, of which 287 were valid in the final analysis. We used statistical analysis methods including factor analysis, validity and form reliability tests, correlation analysis, and regression analysis to investigate our hypothesis. The results of our research include the following:

- (1) New police units and its image need to be strategically**

established and to have breakthroughs in achievement.

- (2) The public image of the mounted police can be grouped into the following categories: importance, intimacy, functionality, professionalism, and attractiveness, and the ability to possibly promote a sole unit organization for the mounted police in the future. Based on the questionnaires, the attractiveness was the most significant factor for the image of the mounted police.**
- (3) Public service and community relations form the main functions of the mounted police. Yet, members spend their spare time practicing their horse-riding skills, thus forming the main focus of our investigation.**

Our research also showed that the impact of the image of the mounted police on that of the regular police force was statistically significant. Based on our research on the image of the mounted police (which can be organized into five components: importance, intimacy, functionality, professionalism, and attractiveness), we can make several research recommendations.

Keywords: mounted police, image, image of mounted police, police image