Administrative management of Peru’s Counter-Terrorism Directorate and influence on its police operations

ABSTRACT
Considering that there are still so-called terrorist remnants affecting the country’s internal order, this research aimed to assess the administrative management of the Dirección Contra el Terrorismo de la Policía Nacional del Perú (DIRCOTE PNP) and its influence on police counter-terrorism operations in Peru, 2019. Decreto Supremo N°026-2017-IN dated October 13, 2017, which approves the regulations of Decreto Legislativo N°1267, Ley de la Policía Nacional del Perú (2017), establishes that DIRCOTE PNP “... is responsible for preventing, investigating, fighting and reporting the crime of terrorism” (art. 115); therefore, DIRCOTE PNP must be effectively managed administratively, so as to enable it to efficiently execute its police operations, founding its management on three important indicators: human resources, technological resources, and logistical resources; thus, an applied investigation was conducted, based on a non-experimental design, with DIRCOTE PNP as the unit of analysis, with a sample of 60 members of the police force (officers and non-commissioned officers), collecting data through surveys and using a questionnaire as tool, which enabled the established indicators. Finally, Spearman’s Rho was applied, resulting in a value of 0.780, which represents a high degree of positive correlation between the two study variables, hence leading to the conclusion that DIRCOTE PNP’s administrative management had a significant influence on police operations against terrorism in Peru, 2019.

Keywords: Administrative management; counter-terrorism police operations; human resources; technological resources; logistical resources.

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INTRODUCTION

Programa Presupuestal N°032: Lucha Contra el Terrorismo (2019), overseen by the Dirección Contra el Terrorismo de la Policía Nacional del Perú (DIRCOTE PNP, 2019), states in its diagnosis that Peru has remained in a state of unrest since 1980, affected by violent acts carried out by the terrorist organizations Sendero Luminoso (OT_SL) and Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru (OT_MRTA). Currently, terrorist remnants (militarized groups) of OT_SL remain in the Valle de los Ríos de Apurímac, Ene y Mantaro (VRAEM) region; as well as with the so-called Generated Bodies (Organismos Generados, OO. GG.), which participate in the country's political and social life.

In view of this scenario, according to Decreto Legislativo N°1267, Ley de la Policía Nacional del Perú (2016) and its regulations, approved by Executive Order No. 026-2017-IN (2017), the following is established:

DIRCOTE PNP is a specialized body, of technical and systemic, regulatory and operational nature, responsible for preventing, investigating, fighting and reporting the crime of terrorism, whether committed by national or foreign individuals or groups in our country, acting under the legal direction of the specialized prosecutor, within the framework of the regulations on the matter. It has nationwide competence. (Decreto Supremo N°026-2017-IN, 2017, art. 115)

In this regard, one of the important aspects to combat terrorism in Peru is the optimization of DIRCOTE PNP's administrative management so as to meet the requirements and needs or bridge existing gaps, especially with regard to human, technological and logistical resources; these are relevant indicators to ensure that counter-terrorism police operations have the best support and are carried out more effectively.

DIRCOTE PNP, as a specialized unit, is also included in the Administrative System of Modernization of Public Management which, in accordance with the National Policy for Modernization of Public Management to 2021 (Presidencia del Consejo de Ministros [PCM], 2012), is required to develop an administrative management in line with an efficient strategic orientation, focused on results and accountable to citizens. This is why this research aims to assess DIRCOTE PNP's administrative management and determine its influence on counter-terrorist police operations in Peru, 2019.

On October 19, 2019, the Política Nacional Multisectorial de Lucha Contra el Terrorismo 2019-2023 (PNMLCT) was approved by Decreto Supremo N°023-2019-IN (2019), establishing, among others, the following objective: “Neutralizing terrorist actions in their various modes, of national or transnational nature, within the national territory” (p. 60), an objective that should be kept in mind to optimize DIRCOTE PNP’s administrative management and achieve greater effectiveness in counter-terrorism police operations in Peru.

Likewise, the aforementioned PNMLCT establishes that “the existence of individuals or organizations that carry out terrorist actions of a national or transnational nature” is a public problem (p. 24); this problem, as indicated in the aforementioned document, is based on the limited operational capacity of the law enforcement agencies (Fuerzas Armadas y Policía Nacional del Perú) to neutralize terrorist acts; limited capacity of law professionals (judges, prosecutors, attorneys, and police personnel); inadequate legal framework to deal with cases of terrorism; intense terrorist activity, particularly in the VRAEM region due to its connection with illicit drug trafficking; thus, generating continuous terrorist acts, which in turn undermines human rights and disrupts internal order.

Under this scenario, DIRCOTE PNP has framed its actions, aligned with the Políticas del Acuerdo Nacional, PNMLCT, Plan Estratégico Sectorial Multianual del Ministerio del Interior (PESEM MININTER), Plan Estratégico Institucional del Ministerio del Interior (PEI MININTER), Plan Operativo Institucional de la Policía Nacional del Perú (POI PNP), and Presupuestal N°032 - Lucha Contra el Terrorismo (PP-032-LCT). Based on these, DIRCOTE PNP guides the development of its administrative management and execution of counter-terrorism police operations in the country.
Although it is true that DIRCOTE PNP carries out its administrative management and executes its counter-terrorist police operations in line with these national and public policies related to the internal sector, it is also true that there are difficulties or gaps which DIRCOTE PNP, as a unit of analysis, cannot overcome. This statement is based on an assessment of indicators related to human, technological and logistic resources derived from a survey conducted among 60 members of the police force, including officers and non-commissioned officers belonging to this directorate.

The most relevant results obtained through this assessment, added to the researcher’s 32 years of experience at PNP, five of which were at DIRCOTE PNP as Head of Planning and Budget, include the following:

- Regarding human resources, the survey found that only 40% of the total number of members of the police force that make up DIRCOTE PNP have been trained and have received specialized training in 2019. This means that there is no adequate training center, so better infrastructure is required to optimize the skills and competencies of PNP personnel in the fight against terrorism, considering, in addition, that it is a complex fight, different from dealing with common crimes.

- With regard to technological resources, the DIRCOTE PNP headquarters (Av. España No. 400, Cercado de Lima) are considered part of Peru's cultural heritage, so it is not possible to make the adjustments required by this specialized unit to fit it out with the equipment and level of technology that are currently necessary; in fact, it does not even have a computer or communications system (ICT network) to enable DIRCOTE PNP subunits to interact with each other at a national level. In spite of this, its different areas are being fitted out with modern computer equipment, but they are still not interconnected at a network level.

- Regarding logistical matters, DIRCOTE PNP depends on Unidad Ejecutora N°026, Dirección Ejecutiva de Investigación Criminal y Apoyo a la Justicia de la PNP (DIRE-ICAJ-PNP), which also serves another eight specialized PNP units, resulting in delays in administrative procedures and management of goods or services required by DIRCOTE PNP and to be used in the execution of counter-terrorist police operations.

It should be noted that, according to information obtained from the transparency page of Ministerio de Economía y Finanzas del Perú (MEF, n.d.), this problem is exacerbated by a 15% reduction in budget allocation in PP-032-LCT for 2019 with respect to the previous year.

During 2019, based on an initial exploratory assessment that resulted in this investigation and according to data shown in Table 1, it is

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Table 1</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>MIB (PEN)</th>
<th>Execution (PEN)</th>
<th>Progress (%-9)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Common actions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program management</td>
<td>1,006,270.00</td>
<td>766,373.00</td>
<td>76.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up and assessment</td>
<td>47,000.00</td>
<td>46,806.00</td>
<td>99.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>1,053,270.00</td>
<td>813,127.00</td>
<td>77.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law enforcement agencies with adequate operational capabilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance and repairs</td>
<td>196,783.00</td>
<td>103,177.00</td>
<td>52.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment and training of personnel</td>
<td>249,343.00</td>
<td>240,687.00</td>
<td>96.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police facilities and maintenance</td>
<td>236,000.00</td>
<td>236,000.00</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>682,126.00</td>
<td>579,864.00</td>
<td>85.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police operations and actions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning and execution of police operations and actions</td>
<td>2,222,178.00</td>
<td>2,209,485.00</td>
<td>99.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information and awareness operations</td>
<td>602,740.00</td>
<td>602,342.00</td>
<td>99.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>2,824,918.00</td>
<td>2,811,827.00</td>
<td>99.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,560,314.00</td>
<td>4,204,870.00</td>
<td>92.20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Taken from Ministerio de Economía y Finanzas del Perú (MEF), n.d.
established that DIRCOTE PNP’s administrative management was not effective, as only 92.2% of its budget for goods and services was executed:

In this regard, support to police operations in the fight against terrorism—related to preventive activities, operational intelligence and police investigation against the crime of terrorism—was affected. According to data provided by DIRCOTE PNP’s Statistics Unit, police counter-terrorism operations in 2019 decreased by 16% compared to the previous year; similarly, preventive activities such as information and awareness operations (psychological operations) decreased by 20%, while the number of people reached by awareness campaigns decreased by 36%; however, terrorist actions increased by 10% in the same study period.

Thanks to DIRCOTE PNP’s work, individuals belonging to foreign terrorist organizations such as Al Qaeda, Hezbollah and the Islamic State have been identified; therefore, it is important that DIRCOTE PNP’s administrative management focus on more effective strategic activities regarding personnel, technology and logistics. In this context, it is important to consider how to achieve effectiveness in administrative management in an organization, as it is the basis for the execution and enhancement of tasks to meet the objectives set and contribute to the organization’s survival and growth; in this regard, Bolivar and Garcia (2014) refer to administrative management when defining what public management is:

Public management is the process of strategically aligning a state organization’s actions with its mission and objectives, in accordance with the priorities established in the National Development Plan, with the purpose of ensuring the greatest possible coincidence between the decisions derived from planning and the actions reflected in the budget approved for the respective fiscal year. (p. 39)

In other words, administrative management in the public sector relates to an organization’s department in charge of using human, technological and logistical resources in the most effective way possible to achieve its objectives; this requires a strategic and operational planning process, which will clarify the decisions to be made in this regard and how to use various resources in an effective and efficient manner. A very important factor in this administrative management is time; an example of this is prioritizing the maintenance of digitized files, since digitized information allows for much faster operations than information on paper.

According to Bolivar and Garcia (2014), another important key is to train and instruct personnel in aspects regarding communication within the organization, implementing and defining communication protocols at each level, determining which mechanisms should be used in each case; thus, the ability to make decisions at the level at which they are developed will not be controversial or doubtful. As a result, the aforementioned authors conclude that “... public servants’ responsibility implies the obligation to know and apply the most advanced management models, which will enable them to optimize the use of the resources entrusted to them” (p. 56).

It should be noted in this regard that, based on professional experience, an key factor in the country’s administrative management is analysis, assessment, follow-up and control, whose processes are generally not given the importance they deserve.

In addition, the Pro-Optim blog (2020) states that organizational management “...is responsible for defining processes and promoting the control and proper allocation of resources, whether financial, material, technological or human” (p. 1), so that, when a higher-level management system is developed, the organization can become more efficient and effective; but here there is a factor to take into account, which is the management model that should be applied to achieve this purpose. The aforementioned reference also mentions the existence of four management models:

(1) Results-based management, based on the organization’s goals and objectives, which must be in line with strategic planning. The idea behind this management model is to engage management and collaborators in the definition and pursuit of previously established results; (2) democratic
management, in which personnel participates in the decision-making process and in the definition of strategies. Communication and transparency are indispensable aspects in this management model, which tends to motivate staff and strengthen their sense of belonging to the organization; (3) process-based management, which focuses on the continuous improvement of organizational processes. An organization that adopts this model seeks to monitor and assess performance in processes and standardize them, in addition to constantly identifying and implementing best practices; and (4) centralized management, where decision-making is concentrated in the hands of the leader, who is at the center of everything, defines objectives, delegates responsibilities, controls performance, provides guidelines and decides on everything. (p. 1)

However, the choice of the organizational management model will depend on different factors, mainly on the strategic objectives; thus, there is no ideal type of management model. Moreover, modern management tools allow good administrative management regardless of the type of management model that is adopted; therefore, it is important to keep in mind tools such as empowerment, total quality, downsizing, outsourcing and emotional intelligence, among others, in order to optimize management in an organization.

Felcman (2015) also establishes four public management models: bureaucratic management; innovative management; participatory management; and organized anarchy. From these public management models, it is important to propose a combination of the bureaucratic management model with the innovative management model, which would provide greater versatility, dynamism, and coherence to the organization in order to interconnect human, technological and logistical resources.

Another important aspect refers to the personnel’s capabilities and competencies. In this regard, Alles (2005) states that "... competencies are those behaviors that will allow us to achieve results" (p. 16); in other words, competencies are understood as capabilities that are applied in an effective, real and proven manner to successfully and fully carry out the activities in an organization.

Similarly, with respect to technology, Stoner et al. (2009) note that "... all administrative functions depend on a constant flow of information regarding what is happening in an organization and beyond it" (p. 671); it is, technology is one of the main tools which administrative management needs to fulfill the functions of planning, organizing, directing and controlling, with which an organization's objectives or goals are achieved.

In the logistics area, in an article published in the ESAN blog, Velásquez (2016) points out that “breaking the vicious circle of mistrust that exists within the public sector supply chain is an arduous, difficult and long-term task. The solution lies in creating a successful and replicable model” (p. 1); in other words, logistics management needs to develop a rigorous planning process, with the help of technology, in order to accurately determine the goods or services to be contracted, thus avoiding excessive or unnecessary purchases; proper procurement must be carried out based on the characteristics of the product or service, and supported with transparent and easily accessible information. Taking these aspects into account, DIRCOTE PNP's administrative management will be optimized, which will make it possible to provide effective support to counter-terrorist police operations in Peru.

With respect to counter-terrorism police operations in Peru, DIRCOTE PNP executes preventive police operations, operational intelligence operations and police investigation against the crime of terrorism. The Ley de la Policía Nacional del Perú (Decreto Legislativo N°1267, 2016) and its respective regulations (Decreto Supremo N°026-2017-IN, 2017) establish the execution of preventive actions against the crime of terrorism, among other functions, to allow people to be aware of the danger and threat posed by terrorist actions. Police operations related to operational intelligence, in accordance with the Counter-Terrorism Operational Procedures Manual (DIRCOTE PNP,
2018), are understood as a set of principles, procedures, techniques and methods for police intelligence operations, in order to obtain information that allows feedback on police activities. Police investigation operations, also based on the above manual, are aimed at destroying terrorist organizations, through the identification of their members, their division into zones, and their arrest, as well as the seizure and/or confiscation of criminal and harmful items for their submission to the competent authorities. This means that these actions are framed within the constitution, Peruvian laws, and the entire legal framework in force, such as Decreto Ley N°25475 (1992) and its amendments, which typifies the penalties for terrorist crimes and the procedures for general investigation, pretrial investigation, and trial.

From the above, it is established that the way in which DIRCOTE PNP’s administrative management is carried out will have a decisive influence on the effectiveness of police operations in the fight against terrorism in Peru; in fact, a correlation analysis of the two main variables (administrative management and police counter-terrorism operations) applying Spearman’s Rho determined a level of 0.780, which implies a high degree of positive correlation, as shown in Table 2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Correlation coefficient</th>
<th>Significance (bilateral)</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V2: police counter-terrorism operations</td>
<td>.780**</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V1: administrative management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V1: administrative management</td>
<td>.780**</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V2: police counter-terrorism operations</td>
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**Note:** Variables V1 and V2 have a high degree of positive correlation, with a significance level of 0.000 < 0.01. Spearman’s Rho was applied. Prepared by the authors, 2023.

METHODS

This is an applied research study, aimed at solving the problems of entities such as DIRCOTE PNP in its different processes; therefore, the research design is non-experimental, since inferences were made about the relationships between the study variables, without direct intervention. Furthermore, DIRCOTE PNP has been considered as unit of analysis, with the study population consisting of police officers and non-commissioned officers at DIRCOTE PNP, with a sample size of 60 people from DIRCOTE PNP’s administrative and operational departments, which is known as convenience sampling. Data collection was done by means of a survey, using a questionnaire as instrument. Finally, a Spearman rank correlation coefficient test was applied in this research, with which complementary assessments were made regarding the level of correlation between the variables under study.

RESULTS

According to the methodology used in this research, a survey was conducted among DIRCOTE PNP’s administrative and operational personnel, based on the objective of this research, with the following main findings:

- A total of 8% of administrative personnel working at DIRCOTE PNP have specialized skills and competencies in the areas of Human Resources, Technology, and Logistics; and 92% do not have these skills or competencies.
- All personnel members surveyed (100%) state that there is a computer or communications network only in some departments,
which prevents effective integration, coordination and communication between DIRCOTE PNP’s different departments, both at the local and national level. In this regard, virtual communications can only be adequately carried out because 85% of personnel have access to the Internet on their assigned computers or laptops, using mainly email communication, while 15% do not have access to the Internet.

- **Unidad Ejecutora N°026-DIREICAJ PNP** is responsible for managing the economic resources to provide the goods and services required for police counter-terrorism operations; however, it also serves another eight specialized PNP units, resulting in only 22% of DIRCOTE PNP personnel stating that their requests are met in a timely manner, while 78% state that they are not. On the other hand, it is very relevant and worrisome that the police personnel surveyed reported that 100% of the rooms, fittings, facilities, and infrastructure are not adequate for the execution of police investigations against the crime of terrorism.

- The various activities carried out by DIRCOTE PNP to achieve the assigned mission and the development of strategies executed by PNP personnel to reduce terrorist actions in the country are related to preventive police operations, operational intelligence operations, and police investigation, as well as to the so-called service commissions, which must have a minimum logistical support for lodging, travel, food, and other aspects required by personnel. Only 60% of those surveyed responded that they do have these resources, while 40% stated that they do not receive these resources in a timely manner.

- Regarding police operations related to police investigation, it is relevant to have access to the database of those entities that make up the judicial system, as well as other related entities such as, for example, the Registro Nacional de Identificación y Estado Civil (RENIEC) and the Superintendencia Nacional de los Registros Públicos (SUNARP). It has been found that 22% of PNP personnel members surveyed have access to these systems, but 78% do not; hence, access to information that is valuable for police investigations is very limited.

- Finally, when analyzing the level of correlation between variables administrative management and police counter-terrorism operations by using Spearman’s Rho, a level of 0.780 was determined, which implies a high degree of positive correlation between both variables; thus, DIRCOTE PNP’s administrative management influences police counter-terrorism operations in Peru.

**DISCUSSION**

When evaluating DIRCOTE PNP’s administrative management as a specialized body of the National Police of Peru, responsible for the fight against the crime of terrorism in the country, it is important to point out that if such management were efficient and effective, it would result in an effective support in the various police activities or operations carried out in preventive matters, operational intelligence and police investigation—also, considering that there is a high level of correlation between the two variables under study, i.e., administrative management and police counter-terrorism operations.

Conde (2017) determines the existence of a significant relationship between these two variables, which means that indicators related to human, technological and logistical resources must be taken into account in operational planning in order for administrative management to be optimal. In addition, Diestra (2018) finds a high relationship between these two variables, which highlights the importance of administrative management; in other words, the way in which administrative management is carried out and the effectiveness achieved, in this specific case, will influence the implementation of an organizational environment that is appropriate for DIRCOTE PNP, an organizational environment that would support police operations. Zubiate (2019) established a high level of correlation between these two variables; therefore, it is evidenced that technology, as part of police administrative management, is decisive, in this case, for police operations in the area of metropolitan Lima.
At an international level, Cepeda (2015) substantiates a new strategy to develop counter-terrorist operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, which resulted from the 9/11 attacks in the United States of America. In this regard, the so-called Counter Insurgency (COIN) is implemented, which not only employs the forces of law and order of that country, but also the collaboration of the populations, as is done in Peru through preventive police operations in the VRAEM area, which forced an improvement in strategies in the field of personnel skills, technology level, and logistical resources; i.e., an optimization of administrative management based on these three indicators to achieve greater effectiveness in counter-terrorist operations.

Finally, it should be noted, as a point to reflect on, that the science of management results from knowledge and action, because it is characterized by being syncretic, pragmatic and eclectic, with decision-making and coordination as its essence. Therefore, it requires both theoretical and practical virtues, capacity for analysis and synthesis, intuitive sense of reality, critical thinking, the art of intelligently choosing from well-defined alternatives, acting by oneself or through others. All actions must be directed, in their sense and purpose, towards the goals and objectives.

CONCLUSIONS

- Understanding management as a people-driven achievement of results and the use of organizational resources, it is concluded that the way in which administrative management is carried out at DIRCOTE PNP will significantly influence the results obtained in police counter-terrorism operations in Peru, 2019. This means that such management should be based mainly on the assessment of indicators related to human, technological and logistical resources, which will lead to greater effectiveness in supporting police operations.

- It is important that police personnel have effective, real, and proven capabilities and competencies in administrative matters, understood as the way to perform a specific activity or assigned duty, for which they must have the skills, knowledge and experience required for the specific job, in order to be recognized as competent.

- It is also concluded that the technology level at DIRCOTE PNP is very limited, considering that technology is a determining factor for communications and adequate interrelation between its sub-units. In addition, DIRCOTE PNP’s administrative management lacks the support of an adequate administrative system (it would be different if it became an executing unit), which would allow for effective management of human, technological and logistical resources, thus providing more effective support for police counter-terrorism operations in Peru.

REFERENCES


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Competing interests
The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

Authors’ Contribution
José Raúl Tacuna Rubio (lead author): Conceptualization, data curation, formal analysis, research, methodology, project administration, validation, visualization, writing (original, revision and edition).