

Supremo app: An integrated probation monitoring system for enhanced rehabilitation and supervision in the Philippines

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Abstract

The Parole and Probation Administration (PPA) plays a crucial role in rehabilitating probationers and parolees. However, the PPA in the 5th district of Camarines Sur faces challenges due to a high number of caseloads, making it difficult to effectively monitor probationers' compliance. To address this issue, a study was conducted to develop the Supremo App, an integrated probation monitoring system specifically designed for the PPA in this district. Utilizing Agile Management Methodology, the study identified the technological components and features necessary for the app's development. Key functionalities of the Supremo App include User Registration and Authentication, Dashboard, Document Upload, Accomplishment Tracking, Search and Filters, and Customization options. After the app's development, usability testing was performed, yielding an average score of 3.50 on the System Usability Scale. While probation officers evaluated the app positively, probationers reported navigation difficulties, indicating a knowledge gap. Ultimately, the Supremo App enhances monitoring efficiency and remote supervision of probationers. However, it also reveals challenges related to resource availability and resistance to adopting new technology. Future iterations of the app should focus on expanding and enhancing offline features, providing comprehensive training programs, and reinforcing data privacy measures to maximize effectiveness and user satisfaction. Such improvements will better serve both the probation officers and probationers, fostering a more streamlined and effective rehabilitative process in the district.

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Introduction

The Philippine criminal justice system comprises five pillars: law enforcement, prosecution, the judiciary, corrections, and the community (Capundan and Belarmino, 2025). These components work together to maintain public order, enforce laws, and rehabilitate offenders. Within this system, rehabilitation and reintegration programs play a crucial role in reducing recidivism and supporting offenders' transition back into society. Probation and parole serve as key mechanisms for this effort, offering structured supervision as an alternative to incarceration while addressing overcrowding in correctional facilities (Morris et al., 2021). The increasing number of individuals under probation and parole supervision underscores the need for efficient monitoring systems that balance rehabilitation with public safety.

In the Philippines, probation is governed by Presidential Decree No. 968, Probation Law of 1976. This allows eligible offenders to serve their sentences under community supervision rather than incarceration. The program aims to facilitate reintegration while imposing court-mandated conditions (Hamai and Villé, 2005). Eligibility is limited to first-time offenders with sentences of 6 years or less, excluding those convicted of serious crimes. Probation officers play a central role in overseeing compliance, conducting investigations, and implementing rehabilitative programs. However, gaps in implementation persist due to high caseloads, resource constraints, and administrative inefficiencies. The Parole and Probation Administration (PPA), which supervises these programs, faces significant operational burdens. Each officer manages an average caseload of 601.37 cases, with an imbalanced ratio of 1:330.59 for investigations and 1:270.78 for supervision (Van Deirse et al., 2021). Additionally, Republic Act No. 11362 (Crum and Ramey, 2023) has expanded officers' responsibilities, requiring them to oversee community service as an alternative penalty for minor offenses. These factors hinder the effectiveness of probation programs, leading to inconsistent monitoring and delayed rehabilitation efforts.

Given the limitations of current probation monitoring approaches, an integrated digital solution can bridge these gaps and enhance rehabilitation outcomes. Technology has the potential to improve probation management by streamlining processes and ensuring more effective supervision. Digital tools such as electronic monitoring systems, case management software, and automated reporting platforms have been adopted in other countries to improve supervision efficiency (Suhartono et al., 2021). The United States and the United Kingdom, for instance, have successfully integrated GPS tracking and digital case management systems, reducing recidivism and optimizing resource allocation. In the Philippines, however, existing digital solutions remain limited to basic administrative functions and lack comprehensive integration with probation workflows. The absence of a unified digital platform hampers effective supervision, communication, and data-driven decision-making (Taer and Taer, 2025).

To address these gaps, this study proposes the Supremo App, an integrated probation monitoring system designed to enhance rehabilitation and supervision for probationers. By leveraging technology, the Supremo App aims to streamline supervision, ensure continuous monitoring, and improve communication between probation officers and probationers. This system will feature user registration and authentication, a dashboard for task management, document upload and tracking, automated notifications, and real-time collaboration tools. Beyond improving administrative efficiency, the app is designed to facilitate better rehabilitation processes by enabling timely interventions and ensuring a structured, data-driven approach to probation management. Tailored to the needs of the Philippine Probation Administration (PPA) in the 5th district of Camarines Sur, the Supremo App seeks to strengthen probation administration, alleviating the workload of probation officers while ensuring a more effective and technology-driven criminal justice system in the Philippines. This study aims to evaluate the usability and effectiveness of the SUPREMO App in probation monitoring.

Literature review

The incorporation of probation practices from various countries in this study is essential for understanding the global application of technology in rehabilitation and supervision. While probation systems differ across jurisdictions, key trends, such as the shift toward digital supervision and the use of mobile technology, are observed internationally. This study draws from diverse probation models to assess how different legal and technological infrastructures impact offender rehabilitation. For example, [Herzog-Evans and Sturgeon \(2022\)](#) examined remote probation supervision during the COVID-19 lockdown in France and Scotland, revealing both adaptability and institutional resistance to digital methods. Similarly, [Nellis \(2024\)](#) investigated smartphone-based electronic monitoring in the U.S., highlighting concerns over privacy and due process. This study ensures a more comprehensive analysis of how technology can be leveraged across different legal frameworks. [Morris and Johns \(2024\)](#) examined digital technology's role in supporting desistance during probation and the ethical challenges of co-production. Using social harm concepts and discussions with an interlocutor, it found that co-production empowered probationers but risked reinforcing stigma. It emphasized ethical complexities and the need for inclusive design. While promoting expert involvement, it lacked empirical data and did not establish official policy. [Järveläinen and Rantanen \(2021\)](#) explored barriers to digital inclusion in Finnish prisons. Using rhetorical and micro-sociological analysis, 26 interviews were examined. Findings showed digital skill gaps and limited internet access as key barriers. Results highlighted mixed views on digital services replacing face-to-face interactions. Implications included shifts in prison culture and staff roles. Limitations involved sample size and context specificity.

[Crawford et al. \(2024\)](#) explored the usability, barriers, and facilitators of mHealth apps for women on probation, focusing on sexual health and safety. A qualitative exploratory intervention development study was conducted using Social Cognitive Theory for data organization. The findings revealed three key themes: self-care, body respect, and connectivity. Results indicated that mHealth apps were feasible, accessible and promoted self-efficacy. The study implied that culturally tailored mHealth apps could provide

gender-responsive support and resources. Limitations included a small sample size and the restriction to iPhone users, potentially limiting generalizability. [Taylor and Bartels \(2024\)](#) assessed the utility of a mobile app supporting Indigenous people on bail or parole in the Australian Capital Territory. Using qualitative interviews, researchers gathered insights from 12 individuals with lived experience and 23 justice professionals. Findings revealed mixed perceptions, highlighting potential benefits and concerns. Results informed policy and practice but faced limitations in sample size and generalizability. [Morris et al. \(2021\)](#) analyzed reflections from practitioners and service users on a digitally enabled toolkit for desistance-focused conversations in probation supervision of men convicted of Intimate Partner Violence. The methodology involved qualitative analysis of testimonies from case managers (N = 9) and probationers (N = 7). The findings highlighted strengths and challenges in implementation. Results indicated the toolkit's potential for supporting desistance but also revealed barriers to integration. The study had implications for probation policies, particularly in light of the Domestic Abuse Bill and post-COVID-19 service recovery. Limitations included a small sample size and challenges in assessing long-term effectiveness. [Bartels \(2023\)](#) assessed the effectiveness of mobile technology in promoting behavior change among individuals in the criminal justice system. A rapid evidence assessment was conducted, analyzing relevant studies. Findings indicated that mobile applications and text reminders positively influenced compliance and rehabilitation. Results highlighted potential benefits, but limitations included data scarcity and methodological inconsistencies. [Herzog-Evans and Sturgeon \(2022\)](#) examined how probation services in France and Scotland were adapted during the COVID-19 lockdown. A qualitative methodology was used, involving interviews with 29 French and 27 Scottish probation staff. Findings revealed initial disorientation but also adaptability. Results highlighted the role of institutional culture. Implications suggested technology's potential. Limitations included post-lockdown changes. [Taylor et al. \(2023\)](#) examined how mobile technology facilitated behavior change among individuals in the criminal justice system. It employed a rapid evidence assessment to analyze relevant literature. The findings indicated that mobile applications and text reminders supported behavioral change. The results highlighted the potential of digital interventions. The study had policy implications but faced limitations in data availability.

[Ganesan \(2025\)](#) examined generative AI in criminal justice, focusing on benefits and challenges. The methodology analyzed technical and ethical concerns. The findings highlighted biases, privacy risks, and fairness issues. The results emphasized ethical protocols and AI transparency. Implications suggested AI's potential if regulated. Limitations included bias mitigation challenges and balancing public safety with freedom. [Tortora \(2024\)](#) examined the transformative impact of generative AI in forensic psychiatry and criminal justice. It employed a comprehensive review of existing literature and AI models. The findings revealed GenAI's potential in risk assessment, diagnostics, and training. Results emphasized ethical concerns. The study highlighted interdisciplinary collaboration but faced limitations in practical implementation and regulatory uncertainties. [Byrne et al. \(2024\)](#) estimated the global correctional population using data from the Global Community Corrections Initiative. A comparative analysis was conducted using country-level data. Findings revealed that 24 million individuals were under correctional control, with 52% in community corrections. The study identified regional

variations in system performance. Limitations included insufficient evaluation research and data inconsistencies. [Pattavina and Mackey \(2024\)](#) examined the global use of technology in community corrections, focusing on electronic monitoring (EM) as a case study. A comparative methodology was used to analyze its adoption across different regions. Findings revealed the widespread use of EM in probation and parole. The results highlighted ethical concerns. Implications and limitations were discussed. [Nellis \(2021\)](#) investigated the global spread and impact of the electronic monitoring (EM) of offenders. It utilized historical and comparative analysis of EM adoption across different countries. Findings revealed varied implementation influenced by culture, commerce, and politics. Results indicated limited success in reducing imprisonment. The study's implications highlighted policy transfer and commercial influence, while limitations included secrecy and lack of comprehensive data. [Kshetri \(2021\)](#) explored the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in human resource management (HRM) in the Global South. It employed multiple case studies of AI tools used in recruitment, selection, development, retention, and productivity enhancement. The findings indicated that AI improved efficiency, expanded recruitment pools, and reduced biases. However, AI tools lacked machine learning capabilities and a scientific basis, limiting their real-world impact. The study implied that AI could transform HRM by reducing biases and improving workforce management. Limitations included AI's evolving nature and restricted application in the Global South. [Hujo \(2021\)](#) analyzed the relationship between social protection policies and inequality in developing countries. It employed a political economy approach, analyzing actors and institutions involved in recent reforms. Findings indicated that social protection policies influenced inequality differently across contexts. Results highlighted contested globalization and institutional dynamics. Implications emphasized policy effectiveness, while limitations included contextual variations and data constraints.

[Silva-Atencio \(2025\)](#) examined the ethical dimensions of Generative AI (GenAI), particularly focusing on necessary guidelines throughout its algorithmic lifecycle. It employed a qualitative, non-experimental, descriptive, and exploratory methodology, utilizing a bibliometric analysis of 150 references. The findings revealed concerns about algorithmic bias, justice, and data privacy. The results indicated an urgent need for regulatory frameworks. The implications highlighted ethical risks in digital platforms, while limitations included the study's reliance on secondary data. [Imandeka et al. \(2023\)](#) reviewed existing literature on smart prison technologies and analyzed challenges in their implementation. A systematic review using the PRISMA protocol was conducted, searching nine credible publishers between October and December 2022. The findings revealed various challenges, including high costs, inadequate design, and ethical concerns. The results categorized smart prison technologies based on IoT architecture. The study had significant implications for improving prison management through technology. However, limitations included reliance on secondary data and the exclusion of non-English sources. [Carrington et al. \(2019\)](#) aimed to extend the scope of critical criminology by incorporating perspectives from the Global South, challenging the dominance of Anglophone scholarship. The methodology involved analyzing criminological contributions from Argentina, Asia, Brazil, Colombia, and South Africa. The findings revealed the need for decolonizing and democratizing knowledge. The results emphasized the importance of cognitive justice. The implications highlighted the necessity of broadening

criminological perspectives beyond the Global North. The limitations included the study's focus on a limited number of countries, leaving gaps for future research. [Porporino \(2018\)](#) explored the historical development, current challenges, and future directions of probation practice. A qualitative methodology was employed, reviewing existing literature and policy frameworks. The findings revealed inconsistencies in probation structures and practices across jurisdictions. The results indicated a gap between probation's potential and actual impact. The implications suggested a need for evidence-based approaches. The limitations included jurisdictional variations. [Nario-Lopez \(2021\)](#) examined how Philippine jail officers manage operational challenges within structurally deficient prisons. Using qualitative methodology and grounded theory, it analyzed data collected over 3.5 years. The findings revealed that officers employed "pag-didiskarte" (resourceful strategizing) to maintain order. The results indicated its effectiveness but unsustainability, increasing occupational risks. The implications suggested that justice reforms must include officers' perspectives. Limitations included focus on one city jail and qualitative subjectivity. [Chan \(2021\)](#) assessed the implementation of the therapeutic community modality program in the Parole and Probation Administration Office in Iligan City, Philippines. A survey methodology was employed using questionnaires administered to 70 parolees and probationers. Findings indicated that the program was effective, influencing rehabilitation positively. Results suggested strong engagement in rehabilitation activities. The study implied the need for additional officers and government support. Limitations included a specific geographic focus and a limited sample size.

While previous research has explored the benefits of digital probation tools, there remains a lack of critical evaluation of their long-term impact, particularly in Global South contexts. Existing studies, such as [Morris and Johns \(2024\)](#) and [Crawford et al. \(2024\)](#), focus on usability and accessibility but do not sufficiently address issues of potential misuse, data security, and ethical concerns. Moreover, studies like [Byrne et al. \(2024\)](#) provide global correctional data but fail to account for local policy variations and socio-economic disparities. This study seeks to bridge these gaps by examining the feasibility, ethical implications, and socio-economic impact of technology-mediated probation tools in the Philippines, drawing comparisons with similarly situated countries in the Global South. By doing so, it contributes to the broader discourse on digital justice reform while ensuring that policy recommendations align with the realities of developing justice systems.

Methodology

Ethical approval for this work has been obtained from the Institutional Ethics Review Board of the Department of College of Criminal Justice Education, University of the Cordilleras, Philippines. The study was reviewed and approved based on its commitment to upholding the rights and welfare of vulnerable populations, specifically incarcerated individuals. The approval covers all aspects of the research, including participant recruitment, data collection, data management, and dissemination of findings, in accordance with the highest ethical standards.

This chapter describes the design and methodologies used in developing and testing the SUPREMO App, an integrated monitoring system on probation targeted at solving issues

surrounding parole and probation supervision in the 5th District of Camarines Sur. The methodologies used are the Agile Management Methodology with Extreme Programming (XP), qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection, and specific statistical tools for analysis.

Aim and research questions

The SUPREMO App was designed to enhance probation and parole supervision by improving monitoring, communication, and reporting between probation officers and probationers. The study aims to assess the system's usability, accessibility, and effectiveness in addressing challenges faced in probation monitoring. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

RQ1: How does the SUPREMO App improve probation monitoring and rehabilitation?

RQ2: How user-friendly and accessible is the system for probation officers and probationers?

RQ3: What challenges exist in the implementation of the SUPREMO App?

Development of the SUPREMO app and its role in probation supervision

The SUPREMO App, Integrated Parole and Monitoring Assistance System (IP-MAS), was developed to enhance probation and parole supervision by improving monitoring, rehabilitation, and compliance tracking. The app provides real-time monitoring and reporting, allowing probation officers to track probationers' activities and compliance status instantly. It features automated notifications and reminders, ensuring that probationers receive timely alerts about scheduled check-ins, community service, or rehabilitation programs. A secure communication platform is integrated into the system, enabling seamless interaction between probation officers and probationers. Additionally, the app facilitates document submission and progress tracking, allowing probationers to submit required reports and monitor their compliance progress. The geolocation tracking ensures that probationers adhere to movement restrictions or designated service requirements. The rehabilitation support feature provides probationers with structured rehabilitation programs, including educational modules, counseling schedules, and behavioral improvement resources.

Example Use Case: If a probationer has a scheduled community service session at 10 AM, the SUPREMO App will send a reminder notification, verify attendance through geolocation tracking, and allow the probation officer to receive real-time confirmation of compliance. If the probationer fails to attend, an automated alert is sent to the officer for immediate intervention. These features strengthen rehabilitation efforts by fostering accountability and providing probation officers with real-time insights into probationers' adherence to rehabilitation plans.

Research and development methods

The SUPREMO App was developed using the Agile Management Methodology, specifically Extreme Programming (XP). Agile methodology is an iterative approach that allows for flexibility and adaptation to user feedback. Within Agile, XP emphasizes frequent releases, continuous testing, and direct user feedback, ensuring that the app is refined according to probation officers' and probationers' actual needs. The XP approach was crucial in making the system efficient, user-friendly, and adaptive to evolving probation management requirements.

Data collection and analysis

A mixed-method approach was used to evaluate the usability and effectiveness of the SUPREMO App.

Qualitative Methods: Structured interviews were conducted with parole and probation officers to understand the challenges in probation supervision and assess how the app addressed them. Thematic analysis was applied to extract key insights from the interviews. The interview guide contained questions focusing on the usability, accessibility, and challenges faced in using the SUPREMO App. Specific questions included:

- How do you perceive the usability of the system?
- What challenges, if any, have you encountered while using the system?
- Do you find the system intuitive and easy to navigate? Why or why not?
- What improvements would you suggest to enhance the system's effectiveness?
- How does the system compare to the traditional/manual method of probation monitoring?

A total of 45 participants took part in the interview, including probation officers ($n = 2$), probationers ($n = 15$), parolees ($n = 14$), and community service participants ($n = 14$). Participants were selected through purposive sampling to ensure representation across different roles and experiences with the system.

Quantitative Methods: A survey questionnaire was administered to probationers to assess usability and accessibility. The System Usability Scale (SUS) was used to measure user satisfaction.

The System Usability Scale (SUS) is a widely used usability evaluation tool consisting of ten Likert scale questions measuring ease of use, efficiency, and user satisfaction. Scores range from 0 to 100, with:

- Above 80: Excellent usability
- 60–80: Good usability but may require improvements
- Below 60: Poor usability requiring significant changes

In this study, a score of 75 or higher was considered indicative of high usability.

The study was conducted in the 5th District of Camarines Sur, specifically at the Parole and Probation Office in Iriga City, which encompasses the municipalities of Baao,

Balatan, Bato, Buhi, Bula, and Nabua. The study population comprised 553 individuals, including probationers under active supervision, parolees, and individuals undergoing community service. The sample consisted of probation officers ($n = 2$), probationers ($n = 85$), parolees ($n = 210$), and community service participants ($n = 256$). A stratified sampling method was employed to ensure proportional representation across different subgroups, and Slovin's formula was used to determine a sample size of 85 probationers with a 0.10 margin of error. Total enumeration sampling was used for parole and probation officers.

The study examined various tasks and responsibilities assigned to both probation officers and probationers through the SUPREMO App. Probationers were required to submit progress reports, attend scheduled rehabilitation sessions, and update their status within the system, ensuring continuous engagement with their rehabilitation programs. Probation officers, in turn, were responsible for reviewing reports, tracking compliance, providing timely feedback, and ensuring that probationers adhered to their assigned programs. These activities were systematically documented within the app, facilitating real-time monitoring, early intervention in case of non-compliance, and comprehensive assessment of rehabilitation progress.

Ethical Considerations

Permission for data collection was formally obtained from the Parole and Probation Administration in Iriga City. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, assured of confidentiality, and provided informed consent before participation.

Data analysis techniques

The study used both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods:

- **Thematic Analysis:** Responses from interviews were analyzed for recurring themes, challenges, and benefits of the SUPREMO App.
- **Five-Point Likert Scale:** Survey responses were measured on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).
- **Frequency, Percentage, and Weighted Mean:** These statistical methods were used to analyze quantitative data and assess overall usability and effectiveness.

Following the system's completion, the SUPREMO App was officially rolled out on April 15, 2024. A 1-month survey was conducted with probation officers and a sample of probationers. Data collection during this period provided critical insights into usability and areas for improvement.

Results

This section presents the results of the study.

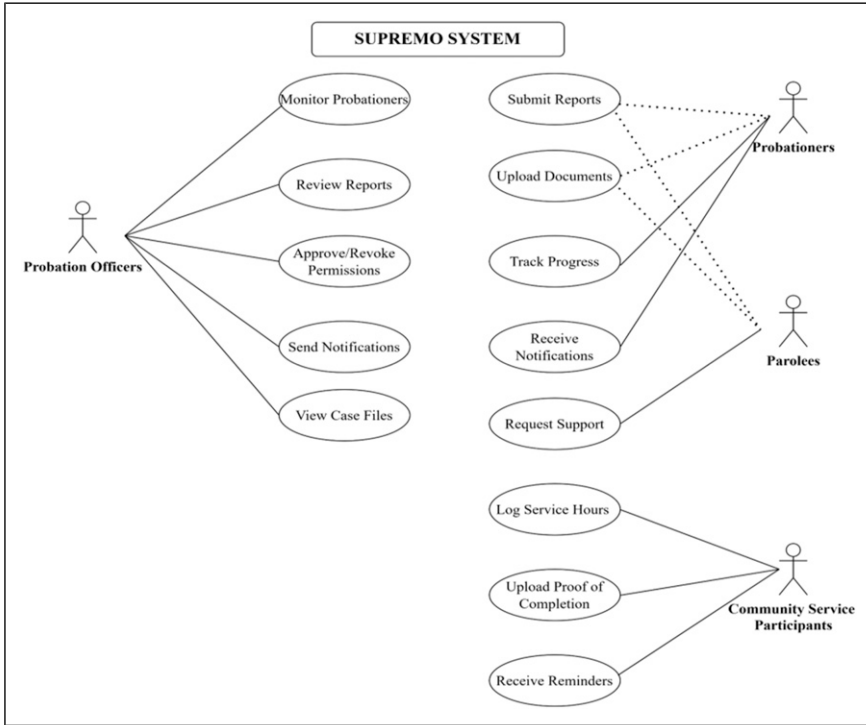


Figure 1. Interactions between study participants.

Technological components and features essential for a successful probation and monitoring system

To properly identify the technological components and features essential for a successful probation and monitoring system, the use case diagram is presented below.

Figure 1 represents the interactions between key users and the SUPREMO App, including probation officers (PO), probationers (P) and parolees (P), and community service participants (CSPs). The diagram illustrates how probationers engage with the system to complete assigned tasks while probation officers monitor progress and compliance.

Figure 2, Use Case Diagram, illustrates how an Admin interacts with the IP3MAS subsystem, particularly focusing on managing tasks or activities, which include viewing/ searching client PPPs and the ability to upload both documents and images as part of the task management process. The Client Probationary Performance Parameters (Client PPPs) serve as key indicators for evaluating probationers' adherence to their rehabilitation plans. The Probation and Parole Management and Supervision System (P3MAS subsystem) is a module integrated within the SUPREMO App that enables probation officers to track activities, submit reports, and maintain seamless communication with probationers. The diagram helps in visualizing the system's functionalities and how different tasks are

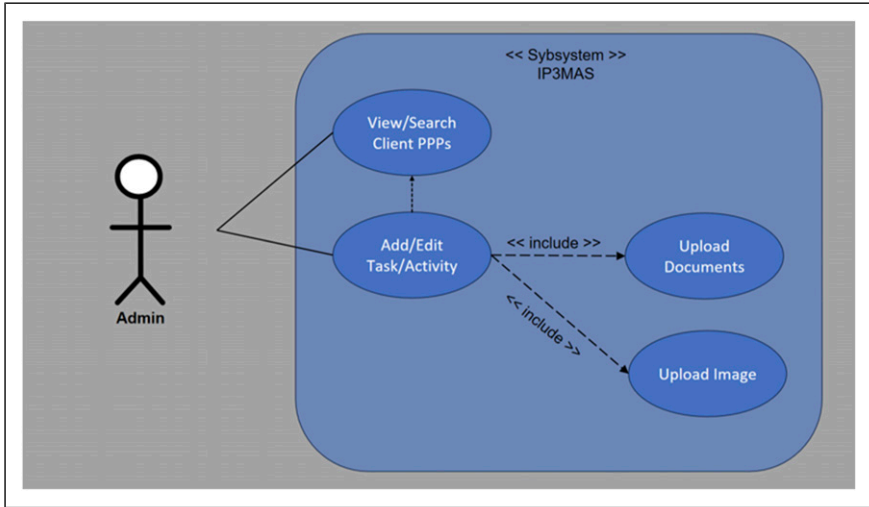


Figure 2. Use case diagram for admin (probation officers).

interconnected, ensuring a clear understanding of what actions are necessary to complete certain processes within the system.

On the other hand, the use case diagram for probationers/pardoners/parolees is presented below.

Figure 3, use case diagram, outlines how individuals who have been pardoned, put on probation, or paroled interact with the system to fulfill their legal obligations. It details the

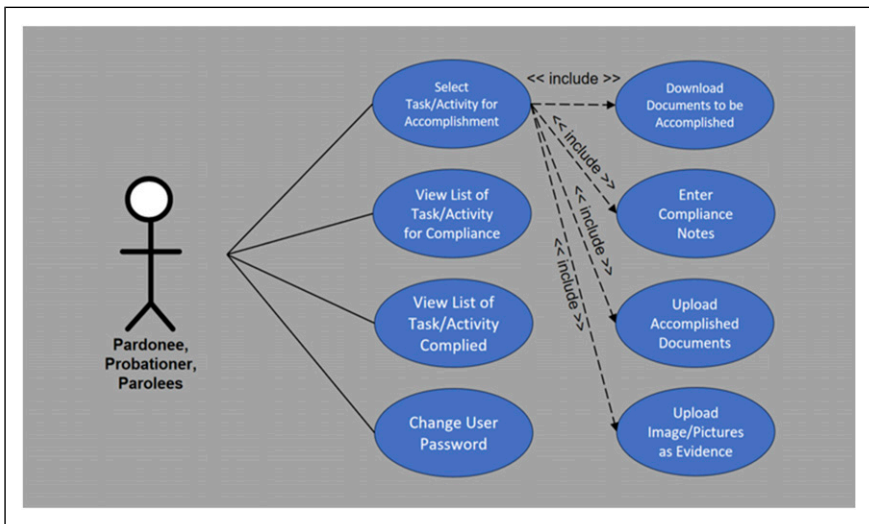


Figure 3. Use case diagram for clients.

process of choosing tasks, accessing compliance lists, and submitting necessary documents or images as proof. The inclusion of relationships indicates that specific actions, such as downloading documents and providing evidence, are essential parts of completing tasks. Furthermore, the option to change their password ensures that users can uphold the security of their accounts.

The following are the system features based on the challenges identified in the earlier discussions.

The industry consultation undertaken by the researcher indicates a necessity to build an integrated system for probation monitoring. Various functionalities, such as user registration and authentication, will aid parole and probation officers in determining the specific program in which a probationer is enrolled, whether active investigation or active supervision.

The inclusion of a dashboard feature provides probationers with a comprehensive overview of the tasks and documents they need to complete to fulfill their program requirements successfully. Including document upload and document management functionality will enable parole and probation officers to ascertain the specific documents that probationers have uploaded.

Additionally, this feature will allow officers to upload documents that provide guidance and instructions to probationers on effectively fulfilling their assigned tasks and activities.

The accomplishment tracking function is a method for documenting and monitoring the tasks and activities that individuals under probationary status have completed. Additionally, the duties and activities encompass the remaining obligations that probationers must fulfill to conclude their program correctly. Implementing search and filter capabilities will facilitate the efficient retrieval of papers or tasks for probationers. Additionally, parole and probation officers can access submitted documents and organize them according to different criteria. This feature effectively mitigates time limitations by automatically directing the user to their desired content within the application. The notification feature lets parole and probation officials know about the duties and activities completed by probationers within a specific time frame, even when they are not actively utilizing the application. The message will be disseminated via SMS, email, or in-app reminders regarding the actions performed by the probationer.

Additionally, the probationer will receive a notification as a reminder of the precise activities that need to be completed within a designated time frame. The inclusion of sharing and collaboration features allows parole and probation officers to disseminate the documents and actions of probationers to relevant individuals who require access to these files to evaluate the application's effectiveness within the administration. Feedback and commenting elements enable parole and probation officers to provide advice and direction on the tasks and activities undertaken by the probationer.

The usability of the probation monitoring app was evaluated primarily through user perception; however, additional measures were considered to provide a more comprehensive assessment. While user satisfaction surveys indicated a high degree of usability, further validation using objective metrics such as task completion time, error rates, and system logs is recommended for a more robust evaluation. Future studies could incorporate SUS or analyze backend data, such as login success rates and time spent per task, to supplement user-reported perceptions. The claim that "registration, authentication, and a

dashboard interface significantly improve the efficiency and accuracy of probation monitoring” is supported by several functional advantages. The registration and authentication processes ensure secure and streamlined access, reducing manual verification efforts by probation officers. Additionally, the dashboard interface centralizes key monitoring metrics, allowing officers to track probationers’ compliance status in real time, thereby reducing administrative burden and improving response times. Preliminary feedback from users indicates that these features enhance workflow efficiency, though further empirical validation, such as comparative analysis with traditional monitoring methods, would strengthen these findings.

Given the sensitive nature of probation monitoring data, privacy and security considerations are paramount. The app processes personal and legal information, raising concerns about unauthorized access, data breaches, and the ethical implications of digital surveillance. To mitigate these risks, the system incorporates encryption protocols for data storage and transmission, role-based access controls to restrict unauthorized entry, and multi-factor authentication to enhance security. Additionally, user consent mechanisms ensure transparency regarding data collection and usage. While these measures align with data protection regulations, such as GDPR and local privacy laws, continuous assessment of potential vulnerabilities is necessary to maintain compliance and user trust.

Level of usability of the supremo app

Two (2) probation officers and a sample from the probationers of eighty-five (85) respondents were asked to rate the usability of the developed system. Table 1 presents the outcomes of the usability test carried out by the researcher.

On the first indicator, “I think that I would like to use this system frequently” obtained a weighted mean of 4.50 for the probation officers and 4.22 for probationers, having an interpretation of Strongly Agree (SA) for probation officers while Agree (A) for the probationers. The responses to the indicator show a notable difference between the two groups, with probation officers expressing a stronger preference for frequent use than the probationers. This implies that the probation officer’s response indicated that they find the Supremo App beneficial and effective in their work. On the other hand, the probationers recognize the benefits of using the app. However, they may have reservations or challenges in using the app, which could be related to its usability and accessibility. Based on the interview conducted with the respondents, the following were gathered:

PO1: “Compared to the manual, this is better. I will go through the entire Rinconada to do my job. At least, with its help easier. Even though I am in Balatan, I still supervise and monitor things elsewhere.”

P21: “I want to check and know immediately how to use it so I can tell you that what I’m doing is right.”

The respondents’ positive attitude towards the system is evident. They find the system to be a valuable tool in the field of monitoring and evaluation, indicating their satisfaction and acceptance of the system.

This statement underscores the app’s significant advantage in terms of efficiency and convenience. The probation officer appreciates the ability to monitor and supervise probationers remotely, which reduces the need for extensive travel and allows for more

Table 1. Comparative level of usability of probation monitoring activity system from probation officers (n = 2) and probationers (n = 85).

Indicators	Probation officers		Probationers	
	Wx	Int	Wx	Int
1. I think that I would like to use this system frequently	4.5	SA	4.22	A
2. I found the system unnecessarily complex	1.5	D	1.81	D
3. I thought the system was easy to use	5	SA	3.84	A
4. I think that I would need the support of a technical person to be able to use this system	3	N	4.31	A
5. I found the various functions in this system were well integrated	5	SA	4.27	A
6. I thought there was too much inconsistency in this system	2	D	2.42	D
7. I would imagine that most people would learn to use this system very quickly	5	SA	4.49	A
8. I found the system very cumbersome to use	1.5	D	2.89	N
9. I felt very confident using the system	5	SA	3.93	A
10. I needed to learn a lot of things before I could get going with this system	2.5	N	2.86	N
TOTAL	3.50	A	3.50	A

Note: Wx (Weighted Mean), Int (Interpretation), S (Strongly Agree), SA (Somewhat Agree), D (Disagree), A (Agree), and N (Neutral).

effective management of multiple locations. This response highlights the app's capability to improve the productivity and reach of probation officers, making them feel empowered and effective in their roles.

The probationer's comment suggests a curiosity and willingness to learn how to use the app effectively. However, it also implies better guidance or training to ensure they feel confident in using the system correctly. This feedback indicates that while probationers see the value in the app, they may require additional support to utilize its features thoroughly.

Both the probation officers and probationers rated the indicator "I found the system unnecessarily complex" as disagree, which obtained a weighted mean of 1.50 for the officers and 1.81 for the probationers. This means that the probationers and officers disagree that the system is unnecessarily complex. It can be implied that they found the system simple even though they only have primary computer or technology manipulation skills.

The indicator "I thought the system was easy to use" obtained a weighted mean of 5.0 with an interpretation of Strongly Agree (SA) for the probation officers, while for the probationers, it was 3.84, interpreted as Agree (A). This suggests that while probation officers found the system highly user-friendly, probationers had a relatively more moderate agreement regarding its ease of use.

A systematic analysis of the 85 probationers' responses revealed three major themes regarding system usability:

- (1) Ease of Navigation (42 probationers - 49.4%)
 - These users reported that the system was generally intuitive and easy to navigate. Some probationers indicated that they quickly adapted after initial exposure.
 - P14: "For us to access the system, the officer will give us an account."
 - P61: "Once I got used to it, I had no trouble."
- (2) Initial Learning Curve (28 probationers—32.9%)
 - A significant portion of probationers found the system somewhat overwhelming at first due to a lack of prior experience with digital platforms. However, most in this group eventually adapted with minimal external support.
 - P83: "*I slightly have a hard time using it. I don't know how to manipulate it.*"
 - P42: "*I don't know where I am in the system or how I will submit my work to Sir.*"
- (3) Significant Challenges in Use (15 probationers—17.7%)
 - A smaller group of probationers struggled significantly, particularly those lacking digital literacy or access to stable internet. This group highlighted the need for training and support.
 - P33: "*You need to teach us first so that we can learn more easily.*"

These findings imply that while the system is generally user-friendly, technical assistance and structured guidance can enhance its accessibility, particularly for those with minimal prior experience using digital platforms.

For the indicator "I think that I would need the support of a technical person to be able to use this system," probation officers rated it at 4.31 (Agree), while probationers gave a

3.0 (Neutral). This reflects a split perception probation officers recognized a higher need for technical support among probationers, whereas probationers were more divided on this issue.

- 61 probationers (71.8%) indicated they could manage basic functions but might need occasional support.
- 24 probationers (28.2%) expressed needing regular guidance to use the system effectively.

The interview data support this finding:

- PO2: *“Some of them (probationers) do not know how to use cell phones or computers, so they need to be taught how the system can be used.”*

These insights emphasize the importance of structured onboarding and ongoing support to ensure efficient system adoption.

The indicator “I thought there was too much inconsistency in this system” received a weighted mean of 2.70 from probation officers and 2.42 from probationers, both interpreted as Disagree (D). This suggests that users found the system consistent and straightforward. However, some minor usability improvements were suggested, particularly regarding notifications:

- P82: *“The system is okay, but it is better if the officer uploads a task; we will be informed so that we will not be late in submitting it.”*

This suggests that while the core system functions were well-received, adding real-time notifications could improve user experience.

For the indicator “I felt very confident using the system,” probation officers reported a weighted mean of 5.0 (Strongly Agree), while probationers rated it 3.93 (Agree).

A breakdown of probationer responses shows:

- 58 probationers (68.2%) felt confident after an initial adjustment period.
- 21 probationers (24.7%) remained somewhat unsure but were willing to continue learning.
- 6 probationers (7.1%) lacked confidence and needed ongoing assistance.

Statements from probation officers reinforce this trend:

- PO1: *“At first, I thought it was hard to use because it involves computers, yet it’s not.”*
- PO2: *“I did not have a hard time even though I only know basic computer skills; I can easily get the system.”*

These findings align with [Honig’s \(2022\)](#) definition of user-friendly software as a system that is straightforward and accessible to all users.

The final usability assessment of the SUPREMO App resulted in an average weighted mean of 3.50 (Agree), indicating general satisfaction with the system. Both probation officers and probationers recognized its usability but highlighted areas for improvement in training and support.

While probation officers initially hesitated to transition from manual supervision to digital monitoring, they ultimately found the system intuitive. Similarly, while probationers experienced an initial learning curve, most adapted with proper guidance. The challenges identified include: digital literacy gaps among probationers and need for structured onboarding/training and suggestions for minor usability improvements (e.g., task notifications). The findings suggest that the SUPREMO App is a viable and effective tool for probation monitoring when supported with proper training and ongoing technical assistance.

Discussion

This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness, usability, and challenges associated with the SUPREMO App, a digital probation monitoring system. Specifically, the study sought to assess how probation officers and probationers interacted with the system, identify key usability issues, and determine the factors influencing adoption. By integrating theoretical perspectives on technology acceptance, user engagement, and digital governance, the study provides insights into the feasibility of digital transformation in probation management. The results indicate that the majority of probation officers and probationers found the SUPREMO App easy to use, though some probationers experienced difficulties navigating its features. This aligns with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) theory (Davis, 1989), which highlights that perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness are primary determinants of technology adoption. The findings suggest that while probation officers adapted quickly, some probationers, particularly those with limited digital experience, required additional training. Additionally, the study identified a demand for proactive notification features, where probationers expressed the need for reminders to complete assigned tasks. This finding is consistent with self-regulation theories in digital behavior (Pachón-Basallo et al., 2022), which emphasize the role of automated reminders in improving user compliance and engagement. Norman et al. (2022) also noted that task completion rates increase when digital applications integrate timely notification systems, suggesting that adding this feature could enhance adherence to probation requirements. Security was another critical factor, with probation officers highlighting the need for enhanced encryption and authentication measures. This concern aligns with previous studies (Treiber et al., 2022) that stress the importance of data integrity and confidentiality in digital law enforcement systems. Susser et al. (2019) further suggested that cybersecurity awareness training improves trust and adoption, reinforcing the need for security-related user education. Manipulating the system refers to how users interact with the SUPREMO App to complete assigned tasks and manage probation-related activities. Probation officers utilize the system to assign tasks, review probationer reports, monitor compliance, and generate performance assessments. Probationers, on the other hand, engage with the system by logging in, submitting reports, marking tasks as completed, and navigating

various features such as communication logs and compliance tracking tools. For example, a probation officer may adjust rehabilitation requirements based on a probationer's progress logs, while a probationer may update their status to indicate the completion of a scheduled rehabilitation session.

This study contributes to the growing body of research on digital governance and technology adoption in the justice system. Previous studies (Weger et al., 2023) emphasized that seamless system functionality is essential for adoption, a finding supported by this study, where users reported minimal system inconsistencies. However, this study extends the literature by highlighting digital literacy as a mediating factor, demonstrating that technological familiarity influences user experience. From a socio technical perspective, the findings reinforce the idea that successful digital tools must balance technological design with human usability (Agote-Garrido et al., 2023). The study aligns with the Diffusion of Innovations Theory (Attie and Meyer-Waarden, 2022), which explains how technology adoption varies among users. The results suggest that probation officers function as early adopters, while probationers, especially those with limited digital skills, fall into the late adoption category, requiring targeted interventions to facilitate engagement and retention. Additionally, the study supports the User-Centered Design (UCD) theory, which emphasizes that digital solutions should be tailored to user needs and capabilities. The findings suggest that simplifying system navigation, integrating guidance tools, and offering personalized onboarding experiences enhance usability, particularly for probationers with low digital literacy.

The study highlights the need for structured onboarding programs to assist probationers with low digital proficiency, ensuring full engagement with the system. Adding push notifications and reminder alerts could improve compliance rates and task completion. Implementing enhanced authentication and cybersecurity training can mitigate risks and build user confidence in the system. Law enforcement agencies should mandate digital competency programs for probationers and officers to facilitate smoother transitions to digital monitoring systems. Governments should allocate funding for digital literacy initiatives, recognizing technology proficiency as a key factor in compliance and successful rehabilitation. While this study provides important insights into the usability and adoption of the SUPREMO App, certain limitations must be acknowledged: The study was conducted within a specific probation monitoring program, which may not reflect the experiences of all digital probation users in different regions or justice systems. The study relies on self-reported perceptions from users, which may introduce social desirability bias or subjective interpretations of usability challenges. The findings are based on a snapshot of initial adoption without examining long-term engagement trends or potential changes in user experience over extended periods. Factors such as device compatibility, internet accessibility, and regional infrastructure may impact user experience but were not extensively examined in this study. Future research should investigate how probationers' engagement with digital monitoring tools evolves, assessing sustained effectiveness. Studies comparing different digital probation tools across multiple jurisdictions can identify best practices for law enforcement agencies. Further research should explore the psychological and behavioral factors that influence technology adoption among probationers, providing deeper insights into motivation and resistance patterns.

Conclusion

The creation of the SUPREMO App, also known as the IPMAS, effectively addresses key challenges in the parole and probation system in the 5th district of Camarines Sur. By integrating essential features such as user registration, authentication, and a dashboard interface, the system enhances efficiency, accuracy, and accessibility in probation monitoring. Its ability to support probation officers through remote supervision significantly improves service delivery, allowing them to monitor multiple probationers while minimizing travel constraints. Beyond its functional advantages, the SUPREMO App plays a crucial role in enhancing probationers' rehabilitation. The system fosters structured progress tracking, ensuring that probationers stay accountable for their rehabilitation milestones. Features like task submission, compliance tracking, and communication logs enable probationers to engage actively in their rehabilitation process, fostering a sense of responsibility and discipline. Additionally, by reducing reliance on in-person check-ins, the app lowers the stress associated with traditional supervision, promoting a more supportive and less punitive rehabilitation environment. The usability assessment indicates that both probation officers and probationers appreciate the system's efficiency and ease of use. While most probationers adapted well to the system, some reported challenges in navigation, highlighting the need for additional training and technical support to maximize its benefits. Ensuring that probationers fully understand and utilize the system's features is crucial for reinforcing their rehabilitative progress and successful reintegration into society. Moving forward, continuous updates, user training, and technical enhancements will be essential to ensure that the SUPREMO App remains adaptable to the evolving needs of both probation officers and probationers. By bridging the gap between supervision and rehabilitation, the app not only streamlines probation monitoring but also actively contributes to the rehabilitation and reintegration of probationers, aligning with its goal of enhanced supervision and support.

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Consent to participate

Participants have been fully informed about the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits. Written consent has been obtained from all participants.

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Declaration of conflicting interests

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Confidentiality and privacy

Personal data will be securely stored, encrypted, and anonymized to protect participant identities. Access is restricted to authorized research personnel.

Voluntary participation

Participants retain the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any adverse consequences.

Risk mitigation

The study design includes measures to minimize psychological and emotional risks, including referrals to support services if needed.

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