

# Vanguard of Justice: Life World of New Criminal Lawyers

Jim Peterick G. Sison<sup>1</sup>, Paulino V. Pioquinto<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Dean, College of Criminal Justice Education, Colegio de Santa Catalina de Alejandria, Inc.

<sup>2</sup>Dean, College of Criminology, University of Cebu Lapu-Lapu and Mandaue Campus

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.10100108>

Received: 04 January 2026; Accepted: 09 January 2026; Published: 23 January 2026

## ABSTRACT

This study addresses a key gap in legal scholarship by deeply exploring the life world of new criminal lawyers during their first two years of practice, moving beyond the traditional quantitative focus on professional attrition. Utilizing a transcendental phenomenological approach, ten criminal lawyers in Dumaguete City, Negros Island Region, Philippines, were selected via purposive sampling and interviewed (FGD and IDI); data analysis was conducted using Colaizzi's method. Findings establish that the initial professional phase is a crucible: participants quickly forged a commitment to justice and mastered advocacy, yet this period was severely strained by the complexity of the legal labyrinth and a relentless tempest of professional and client expectations. Successful adaptation to these challenges hinged on two core mechanisms: intentional self-development (Carving Paths of Wisdom and Precision) and anchoring to a robust support network (The Pillars of Partnership and Trust). Ultimately, a reliable support system was found to be critical for professional transition, guiding lawyers toward their twin goals of upholding The Beacon of Purpose and Principle and pursuing continuous excellence. This study strongly recommends that the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) and legal institutions institutionalize formal mentorship, dedicated mental health resources, and targeted professional training to sustain and empower these new legal practitioners.

**Keywords:** Life World, New Criminal Lawyers, Phenomenological Design, Legal Practice, Dumaguete City

## INTRODUCTION

Criminal law maintains the rule of law, protects individual rights, and ensures the equitable administration of justice (United Nations, 1990). Within this framework, new criminal lawyers serve as the first line of defense, upholding due process and safeguarding the rights of the accused. However, the transition from legal education to professional practice is recognized globally as a period of acute vulnerability and significant challenge (Caguioa, 2024). Early career lawyers often face intense psychosocial risks, including high workloads, emotional stress from complex cases, and skill gaps in courtroom advocacy and procedure (Pike & Quinlan, 2025). The first years of practice are highly influential in shaping a lawyer's professional identity, ethical regard, and long-term commitment to the vocation. These difficulties are particularly pronounced in regional areas like Negros Island Region, where resource constraints often compound the professional pressure.

The researcher, drawing on a career encompassing legal practice, registered criminologist, and as Assistant Dean of the College of Criminal Justice Education at the Colegio de Santa Catalina de Alejandria (COSCA), possesses a unique appreciation for the problems and prospects facing new criminal lawyers. This insider perspective justifies the authority needed to conduct this deep exploratory study.

This research, therefore, addressed the gap in qualitative understanding by illuminating the life world of these new lawyers. The findings revealed that this initial phase is a crucible: while participants quickly forged competence, this period was characterized by being severely strained by the complexity of the legal labyrinth and a relentless tempest of professional and client expectations. Successful navigation hinged on dual core mechanisms: intentional self-development and anchoring to a robust support network. These insights lay the essential groundwork for improving legal education and support systems, guaranteeing that future criminal lawyers are better prepared to thrive in the profession and contribute meaningfully to the Philippine justice

system.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The professional life of a new criminal lawyer in the Philippines is stringently governed by laws that establish their duties and ethical standards. The Code of Professional Responsibility and Accountability (CPRA) is the cornerstone guiding these obligations, requiring commitment to competence, integrity, and justice (Caguioa, 2024). Furthermore, Rule 138 of the Rules of Court dictates the conduct expected of all members, while the Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) Program (Bar Matter No. 850) mandates continuous professional development. These instruments collectively define the high standards against which new lawyers' performance is measured and evaluated.

Beyond the ethical framework, procedural compliance places immediate, high-stakes pressure on new advocates. This is evident in the Supreme Court's Revised Guidelines for Continuous Trial in Criminal Cases (A.M. No. 15-06-10-SC, 2017), which impose strict deadlines and thorough preparation requirements. Similarly, the 2024 DOJ-NPS Rules (DOJ Circular No. 015, s. 2024) and the earlier DOJ Circular No. 049, s. 2012 establish detailed procedural expectations for those engaged in criminal prosecution. Mastery of these rules is required immediately upon entering the field. Adherence to these complex regulations defines the technical difficulty of the new lawyer's daily workload.

Moving from the regulatory context to the personal experience, the transition from law school to practice is globally recognized as a complex period marked by acute vulnerability and significant professional hurdles. New lawyers are particularly susceptible to intense psychosocial risks, including high job demands, emotional strain, and the risk of vicarious trauma (Pike and Quinlan 2025). This heavy burden exacerbates the competence gap, where the practical chasm between academic knowledge and courtroom reality forces new practitioners into a high learning curve (Andrews, 2004). This difficulty mirrors the negative experiences captured by the study, particularly the overwhelming "tempest of expectations."

Compounding these professional pressures, the legal profession exhibits significantly elevated rates of psychological distress, anxiety, and burnout compared to the general population. The seminal work by Krill, Johnson, and Albert (2016) first documented this high prevalence of substance use and mental health concerns among attorneys. Subsequent studies confirmed that work overcommitment and stressful organizational values often contribute directly to these mental health problems (Krill et al., 2022). The emotional strain of high-stakes criminal cases further increases the risk of compassion fatigue and burnout. This necessity underscores the importance of the internal and external support networks identified in the study's findings.

Organizational structure itself frequently contributes to lawyer vulnerability and attrition. The high-pressure, commercialized legal environment can create an "unhappy, unhealthy, and unethical profession," prioritizing profit over collegiality (Schiltz, 1999). This environment often associates success with extreme working hours, which leads to work-life conflict and exhaustion, particularly among junior associates. Anker and Krill (2021) demonstrated that these organizational factors, along with high stress levels, are significant predictors of mental health problems and attrition, particularly among women. Therefore, the challenges faced by new lawyers are not merely personal but are deeply rooted in the culture and structure of the legal workplace.

Despite this taxing environment, new criminal lawyers find significant fulfillment in their role as defenders of justice. The initial commitment to the rule of law and successful outcomes in client defense serve as profound sources of professional satisfaction (United Nations, 1990). However, the necessity for successful adaptation hinges on the development of expert skills. The Deliberate Practice Theory (Ericsson et al., 1993) asserts that mastery requires sustained, focused activity in high-stakes environments, such as courtroom engagement.

This principle emphasizes that simply accumulating years of experience is not enough; rather, focused, effortful practice that tests one's boundaries is key. For new criminal lawyers, this involves analyzing past case failures, seeking immediate feedback, and refining litigation techniques outside of live proceedings. This hands-on, reflective process transforms theoretical knowledge into the practical, intuitive advocacy identified in the themes of this study. This transformation is necessary for the new practitioner to survive the competitive demands of

their first years.

The cognitive progression through skill development is formally described by the Dreyfus Model of Skill Acquisition (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986). This model charts the path from the Novice stage, where the lawyer relies strictly on learned rules and procedures, to the Expert stage, characterized by intuitive, holistic decision-making. New lawyers begin their careers at the early stages, where complexity leads to anxiety and difficulty in prioritizing facts. They must rapidly learn to shift from abstract legal rules toward context-dependent ethical and tactical decisions in the courtroom.

Essential to this progression is the formation of a professional identity, which is profoundly impacted by experiential learning opportunities. Professional identity formation involves the internalization of core values, beliefs, and ethics necessary to perform the role of a lawyer (Bess, 2025). This concept moves beyond mere ethics compliance, demanding a deeper integration of personal values with professional responsibilities. The process of forming this identity begins in law school but is solidified in the demanding environment of early practice.

The Carnegie Foundation's study on legal education identified three core apprenticeships necessary for effective lawyering. These include the intellectual (thinking like a lawyer), the practical (learning professional skills), and the ethical-moral (internalizing values of the profession) (Sullivan et al., 2007). New criminal lawyers must engage all three simultaneously while managing an active caseload. The ethical-moral apprenticeship is particularly challenging, as the adversarial nature of criminal law can often strain personal morality.

The intense demands necessitate that new lawyers cultivate robust, long-term coping strategies. Cultivating a Growth Mindset (Dweck, 2006) is crucial for translating professional setbacks into learning opportunities, thereby sustaining resilience. Without this adaptive internal approach, the risk of burnout becomes unmanageable, leading to potential career attrition or disciplinary issues.

The adoption of formal systems, such as effective time management and organization skills, is equally vital for mitigating the feeling of being overwhelmed by high workloads. Pike and Quinlan (2025) specifically suggest that managerial interventions in workload allocation and providing support are necessary to address the psychosocial risks. New lawyers must use technology and structured workflows to manage the volume of cases mandated by rules like the Continuous Trial Guidelines.

Mentorship and a strong support network are consistently identified as non-negotiable professional resources. Mentorship provides the structured guidance necessary to contextualize the immense body of legal knowledge and navigate complex political or organizational structures (IE Insights, 2017). Hamilton and Bilionis (2022) strongly advocate for intentional professional development programs that bridge the gap between academic preparation and realistic workplace expectations. The supportive relationships captured by the study's theme The Pillars of Partnership and Trust are thus essential for accelerating skill acquisition and mitigating psychosocial risks.

Finally, organizational support for lawyer well-being is increasingly recognized as an ethical imperative, not just a benefit. Organizations must create cultures that prioritize health over profit, offering resources to manage stress and prevent substance abuse (Krill et al., 2022; Schiltz, 1999). This institutional commitment directly impacts the sustainability of new practitioners, ensuring they remain competent and dedicated to the profession.

The aspirations of new lawyers often align with the core values of the profession, reinforcing their initial commitment to justice. Lawyers seek continuous learning and professional development to keep abreast of emerging legal standards, new technologies, and best practices in the delivery of legal services (IE Insights, 2017). This drive for excellence is linked to the desire to contribute to the broader justice system, upholding the principles of equity and fairness (United Nations, 1990). The findings of this study reinforce that these aspirations for excellence depend critically on the institutional support systems that facilitate, rather than hinder, the new lawyer's journey from novice to expert.

## The Problem

### Statement of the Problem

This study explored the life world of new criminal lawyers in Dumaguete City.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following sub-problems :

1. What are the experiences of the participants during the first two years of their legal practice?
2. How do the participants address the challenges they encountered during the first two years of their legal practice?
3. What are the aspirations of the participants to improve their legal services?

### Significance of the Study

The result of the study will benefit the following entities:

**New Criminal Lawyers.** The study's findings would offer insightful information, practical tools, and tactics to these new criminal lawyers. The research seeks to identify the difficulties they encounter and offer helpful guidance in order to give them the tools they need to be successful in their positions.

**Young Lawyers Association of Cebu (YLAC), Inc.** Using this research, mentorship opportunities, courses, and focused programs can be created to help young attorneys navigate their early careers. In keeping with YLAC's objective to promote the welfare of its members and the legal profession, the study also deepens our understanding of how to enable aspiring criminal attorneys to become successful advocates for justice.

**Law Firms.** The study's findings would form the basis for curricula especially designed for the needs of new criminal lawyers. When new criminal lawyers enter the legal field, they would find that these courses were a rich source of guidance and support that helped equip them with useful skills.

**Legal Education Institution.** The study's findings are important because they could change the legal education programs. These providers can better equip prospective lawyers with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in the workplace by integrating ideas from the experiences of criminal attorneys in practice.

**Legal Researchers.** The results of the study are important because they add to the growing body of knowledge regarding the benefits and drawbacks experienced by new criminal lawyers.

**The Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP).** The IBP can utilize the study's results to carry out initiatives and training programs tailored to the requirements of aspiring criminal attorneys. Mentoring programs, criminal practice-focused continuing legal education (CLE) courses, and tools for handling stress and moral dilemmas may fall under this category.

**The Supreme Court (SC) of the Philippines.** The results of the study can help the Supreme Court understand the real-world challenges of new criminal lawyers, and hence, enact rules that foster their growth and address performance concerns. The study can help clarify how courts can use capacity-building and mentoring initiatives to assist rookie criminal attorneys in their professional development.

**Courts.** The study could facilitate the courts in better and deeper evaluation of new lawyers in their performance and appropriately aiding them or guiding them for such challenges and pressures at which they are always bombarded with on daily matters. Courtroom procedures, even mentoring programs and the appropriation of resources can thus be suited to their needs.

**Department of Justice (DOJ).** Understanding the unique challenges that new lawyers from diverse backgrounds face will help the Department of Justice develop strategies to attract and retain a more diverse legal workforce, thereby leading to greater access to justice for all.

**The Community.** The findings of this study will serve to increase the consciousness needed to improve awareness on what challenges new criminal lawyers encounter when practicing criminal law, especially before the poor and marginalized communities. The initiative helps to fund such programs including pro bono, legal aid clinics, and campaigns to create awareness for everyone.

**The Researcher.** Immersion in research topic broadens the knowledge base of the researcher, establishes him as an expert on all issues related to new lawyers adjustments and learning experiences.

**Future Researchers.** The study provides a good starting point for future researchers who are interested in similar topics or the professional development of legal practitioners. It looks in detail at the challenges and learning paths of new criminal lawyers.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

When a group or populations with difficulties or issues have to be studied, qualitative inquiry will most suit (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Thus, this study was conducted using a qualitative research methodology based on Edmund Husserl transcendental phenomenology and guided by the principles of Moustakas (1994).

Participants' observation and in-depth interviews are critical components of phenomenological investigation. The phenomenological point of view stress the significance of understanding what individuals experience and how they interpreted the environment, made this method the ideal option for this study (Husserl, 1900). This serves as the starting point for examining the experiences of a group of individuals who have gone through a similar situation, as well as any emotions, reactions, sentiments, changes, difficulties, or progress that result from this experience. The researcher excludes any personal bias since he aims to acquire an unbiased summary of the raw data. Transcendental Phenomenology will use as a result.

Moustakas (1994) developed Husserl's transcendental phenomenology, which focuses on the use of "epoché" or bracketing the preconceptions. In bracketing personal biases, the researcher seeks to obtain a description of the participants' experiences free from bias. The process requires deep reflection about the phenomenon, allowing the lived experiences of the participants to emerge unobstructed by the presuppositions of the researcher. Therefore, Moustakas (1994) approach to transcendental phenomenology is in complete agreement with the aim of this research, which is to achieve authentic and undistorted understanding of participants' experiences.

On the other hand, the lived experiences of participants are the main emphasis of hermeneutic phenomenology. It places a focus on how each person interprets things differently in their own setting. According to this study approach, each person is as distinctive as their life story (Sloan & Bowe, 2014). To vary hermeneutic phenomenology with transcendental phenomenology, the latter aims to get an unbiased description of the raw data, therefore there is an exclusion of any personal prejudice. In hermeneutic phenomenology, it strives to understand the descriptions and co-construct meaning, so the points of view are significant.

Vagle (2014) added that phenomenology shall be an inductive and introspective methodology. The goal of phenomenological research methods is to gain understanding from a subject's stories of their past, lived experiences. Phenomenology explains the significance that humans give to commonplace events.

### Research Environment

This study was conducted in Dumaguete City, Negros Island Region.

Dumaguete City, popularly known as the City of Gentle People, is also the capital of Negros Island Region. As of August 1, 2015, it posted a total population of 131,377 people. Males made up 48.97 percent of the total population, or 64,331 people, while females made up 51.03 percent, or 67,046 people.

### Research Participants

There were ten (10) new criminal lawyers who served as participants for the study, all of whom had been

practicing criminal law in Dumaguete City. A minimum number of participants were interviewed to explore their lived experiences. Four (4) participants participated in individual discussions, while another six (6) participants took part in a Focus Group Discussion.

The participants were selected based on the following pre-determined criteria: (a) they were engaged in legal practice in Dumaguete City, (b) they were handling at least five (5) criminal cases, and (c) they had been practicing law for at least two (2) years.

The sampling technique applied was non-probability sampling since it did not give an equal chance for all members of the population. The type of selection applied to participants in the study involved purposive sampling. The purposeful selection of the participants involves picking participants to be part of a study to achieve certain aspects of objectives that relate to the relevance of experiences and characteristics as they have happened (Palinkas et al., 2015). Participants were selected based on how relevant they were to the study and the specific insight they could provide rather than their availability or convenience (Jala, 2011).

## Research Instrument

The researcher utilized an interview guide (IG) along with an informed consent form as tools in the data gathering process. To ensure that the questions would effectively prompt a thorough discussion of the phenomenon, the interview guide underwent a validation process. After the experts validated the interview guide, the researcher proceeded to collect data.

During the data collection process, the researcher was equipped with an audio recorder and field notes to capture and preserve the information provided by the participants. Verbatim statements from both individual and focus group discussions were treated with confidentiality. The interview guide was divided into three parts: part one covered the participants' experiences during their first two years of legal practice; part two focused on how they addressed the challenges encountered during that period; and part three explored their aspirations for improving their legal practice.

## Research Procedures

The researcher proceeded to the environment to conduct an initial survey for the pre-selection of participants after the topic was approved. Once the participants were pre-determined, the researcher visited them again to request their consent to participate in the study. To interview and observe the participants, a researcher has to provide them with an informed consent form for them to sign before conducting the interview. The purpose of the informed consent form was to explain the purpose of the consent to the participant before granting their formal consent.

**Data Collection.** Before the field interview began, the researcher reviewed the study's objectives with the participants to ensure they were aware of the interview's format. Additionally, the researcher informed them that none of their verbatim comments would be made public and would be kept confidential. Each face-to-face in-depth interview session lasted about 30 to 45 minutes per participant. The interviews were conducted in the participants' respective law offices. Field notes and an audio recorder were used to collect all the data.

The participants were prompted to respond to the questions outlined in the interview guide during the interview. Follow-up questions were provided to clarify certain responses. Through this questioning, they had the opportunity to share and elaborate on their life experiences as new criminal lawyers.

**Data Analysis.** Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis methodology served as the foundation for the data analysis strategy for this investigation. A versatile and thorough method of examining the phenomenon being studied, thematic analysis offers a methodical approach to finding, evaluating, and summarizing patterns (themes) in data. Thematic analysis, according to Braun and Clarke, allows researchers to create in-depth, logical, and perceptive explanations of complicated data that are based on the participants' actual experiences.

The process in this study included a number of crucial steps. The researcher began by reading the verbatim

transcripts of each participant several times in order to become fully immersed in the data. During this stage, the researcher was able to familiarize themselves with the material and start to discern preliminary perceptions of the participants' experiences. Second, the researcher used key words, phrases, or statements that were pertinent to the research subject to create preliminary codes. To make sure no important detail was missed, the researcher applied these codes to the data in a methodical way.

Third, by organizing these codes into more comprehensive, significant themes that encapsulated the core of the individuals' actual experiences, the researcher looked for trends. These cluster themes underwent additional development and refinement to become more focused emerging themes. Fourth, the researcher examined these themes to make sure they were unique and backed up by the participants' responses, and that they appropriately reflected the facts. The coherence and consistency of the themes throughout the full dataset were also guaranteed by the researcher at this step.

Fifth, using direct quotes from the participants to highlight and validate the themes the researcher created a comprehensive and well-organized report of the findings. The sixth phase entailed integrating any new or relevant material obtained from participant validation into the analysis to ensure that participant perspectives were accurately represented and consistent with the themes. Last but not least, the researcher made sure the themes were based on the participants' own words and interpretations, representing an honest and objective description of their experiences to establish unity with their lived experiences.

For transparency, line numbers and codes were used to guide a thorough analysis of the transcripts. In order to precisely determine each statement's core meaning, significant statements were isolated and given articulated meanings. The context of each statement was given particular consideration. The developing themes were built upon these developed basic meanings.

**Ethical Consideration.** Several precautions were taken in this investigation to avoid ethical problems. Steps were taken to protect the participants' privacy. Transparency and honesty were upheld in the processing of research-related communications and information. The participants were given access to the transcripts, but all other study information including their identities and any further observations was kept private.

**Trustworthiness of Research.** The truth value or trustworthiness of these participants was maintained in this study. Credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability must all be present. To acquire the participants' trust, these four things must be present before and after the interview. The participants participated and answered the questions honestly as a result of this.

**Credibility.** This refers to the degree to which the study accurately captures the real meanings of the research participants, also known as the "truth value," is referred to as credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In order to establish the credibility of the study, the researcher made sure that integrity was properly observed during data collection, particularly during the interviews, where he refrained in drawing conclusions from the interviews and instead based everything on factual data that was provided by the participants. The researcher ensured that no pertinent information was left out and no extraneous information was included.

**Transferability.** According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), "transferability" pertains to the degree to which a phenomenon or collection of findings from one study may be applied to theory, practice, and more research; in other words, the findings of the study can be applied to different contexts. To address transferability, the researcher had gone into great depth about the theories that underpinned the research as well as the environment in which it was conducted. The researcher made sure that the data were well-described so that whoever wanted to apply the findings to a new context would be in charge of determining whether it was appropriate.

**Confirmability.** This is further supported by Ramsey (2010), who claims that confirmability is the degree to which the findings are supported by additional sources. Suter (2012) backs up this assertion by stressing the need of maintaining objectivity and minimizing researcher bias in research projects. In order to prevent data from being distorted, the researcher put aside his own beliefs, presumptions, and judgments in order to address the study's confirmability. One technique guaranteed by confirmability was to employ audio-recorded interviews, note-taking, and journals consistently throughout the research.

**Dependability.** Time series data must be consistent across circumstances for research. Ramsey (2010) claims that dependability is a criterion that is seen as being identical to reliability and sharing a similar interest in the outcomes' stability over time. Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis methodology were used by the researcher to maintain consistency during the data collection and analysis in order to establish the dependability of the study. The study would be trustworthy as a result.

**Bracketing and Reflexivity.** The researcher was aware that his background as a criminologist-lawyer could influence his perception of the participants' experiences as new criminal lawyers while conducting this transcendental phenomenological study. In order to remain objective during the data processing and interpretation phase, he deliberately tried to put aside his preconceptions and preconceived notions about the experiences, vulnerabilities, coping mechanisms, and life goals of the participants. He was aware, nevertheless, that his personal criminological background might still affect how he interpreted the information. Being a criminologist-lawyer, he acknowledged the possibility of having unintentionally formed biases and assumptions about the life world of new criminal lawyers.

Throughout the study, he actively challenged his preconceptions and critically reflected on how his background might affect his understanding of the participants' experiences. He kept a reflective diary in which he recorded his ideas and reflections in order to guarantee objectivity and openness. He examined the facts objectively while constantly evaluating and resolving the possible effects of his own positionality and biases by fusing bracketing and reflexivity.

## Definition Of Terms

For the sake of making this study simpler to understand, the researcher has operationalized the terminology below.

**Addressing the Challenges Encountered by the Participants during Their First Two Years of Legal Practice.** This refers to the application of tactics and measures to get beyond or lessen the difficulties people encounter in their work-related responsibilities.

**Aspirations of Participants to Improve Their Legal Services during Their First Two Years of Legal Practice.** This refers to their professional goals, ambitions, and desires as they begin and progress through their criminal law careers.

**Experiences of Participants during the First Two Years of Their Legal Practice.** This refers to the professional and personal encounters, both positive and negative, as well as the challenges and learning opportunities that individuals new to the field of criminal law face.

## PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

This chapter describes the presentation and analysis of data gathering that aimed to learn about the lived experiences of the participants as new criminal lawyers, including how they described their vulnerabilities, addressing the challenges encountered, and also to be enlightened about their aspirations.

### Presentation of Data

To deal with the descriptions of the participants' experiences, all of the recorded statements from the participants were read and examined numerous times. The significant statements were taken directly from the participants' transcripts that related to the study's phenomena (See appendix G for sample significant statements).

Several procedures were arranged before sorting into emerging themes. Formulated meanings were generated from the significant statements and ordered to produce the meanings (See appendix H for sample of formulated meanings). Cluster themes were gathered and classified into emergent themes (See appendix I for sample of cluster themes with emergent themes). As a result, the findings provided a thorough and rich account of the participants' personal experiences.

## **Emergent Themes**

One hundred twenty- seven(127) formulated core meanings were created from significant statements. Twenty-nine (29) cluster themes from the ninety three (93) stated core meanings were found, reorganized, and classified into twelve (12) emergent themes (See appendix L for diagram of common themes). The emergent themes were classified with overarching themes as experiences of the participants as new criminal lawyers, description of vulnerabilities as new criminal lawyers, addressing the challenges encountered, and life aspirations. The following are the summary of the themes:

### **I. Experiences of Participants during the First Two Years of Their Legal Practice**

#### **A. Positive Experiences**

1. Forged in the Fires of Justice
2. Mastering the Art of Advocacy
3. Weaving the Tapestry of Precision

#### **B. Negative Experiences**

1. Navigating the Labyrinth of Law
2. The Symphony of Counsel and Resilience
3. Wading Through the Tempest of Expectations

### **II. Addressing the Challenges Encountered by the Participants during Their First Two Years of Legal Practice**

1. Carving Paths of Wisdom and Precision
2. The Pillars of Partnership and Trust
3. The Dance of Triumph and Trial

### **III. Aspirations of Participants to Improve Their Legal Services during Their First Two Years of Legal Practice**

1. The Beacon of Purpose and Principle
2. The Garden of Growth and Knowledge
3. The Quest for Excellence

The emergent themes formed from the life stories the participants' vulnerabilities as new criminal lawyers were presented and described below.

### **I. Experiences of Participants during the First Two Years of Their Legal Practice**

#### **A. Positive Experiences**

From the responses of the participants, three themes related to their positive experiences as new criminal lawyers have emerged. The following themes are:

**Forged in the Fires of Justice.** This theme encompasses the positive experiences of the participants as they grow and develop through the challenges, victories, and responsibilities of practicing criminal law. Participant

1 expressed a profound sense of fulfillment linked to his experiences as both a private prosecutor and defense counsel, stating:

As a private prosecutor, one of my fulfilling moments was when I was able to gather all of the pieces of evidence to successfully file a case in the preliminary level or in the fiscal level. And as a defense counsel, one of my fulfilling moments as well is to be able to file a counter-affidavit within the time frame provided by the fiscal (IDI1: SS1).

Participant 2 illustrated his personal growth through challenges, illustrating how resilience develops in the face of daily difficulties. He shared:

One of the fulfilling moments that I've encountered is when I was a defense counsel of a reckless imprudence resulting to damage to property case wherein my client was ready to enter plea of guilty and by that, I was scheduled for pre-trial already, so he was ready to enter plea of guilty but however, I was hesitant because when you enter plea of guilty, the penalty would be imprisonment, or aside from imprisonment you were able to pay for damages and it would be the criminal referred and the he's planning to go to then he was planning to go abroad, so as much as possible, I don't want him to enter plea of guilty. So, during that time, we were able to, during the hearing, we were able to talk to the complainant and also the prosecutor, and then we were able to agree for an amicable settlement. So, he was not able to enter plea of guilty, and the complainant filed a desistance, to withdraw the case. So, I find it fulfilling because I was able to protect also the interests of my client. At the same time, he was able to pay for the damages of the complainant (IDI2: SS13).

Participant 4 also exemplifies the efficacy of negotiation and persuasion in resolving cases amicably, highlighting the importance of compromise in attaining just outcomes within the boundaries of ethical and legal parameters. He described a significant moment:

Fulfilling moments, one of which is during, in a preliminary investigation proceeding before the office of the city prosecutor involving a case for violation of BP-22, attorney, I was able to persuade the complainant and his counsel to enter into a compromise with my client, the defendant therein. I am honored that I was able to protect the interests of my client within the bounds of law and standard of ethical representation (IDI4: SS39).

**Mastering the Art of Advocacy.** This theme centers on the experiences of the participants as they hone their advocacy abilities and negotiate the challenges of legal representation. For lawyers to enhance litigation techniques and crafting persuasive arguments in court, Participant 7 emphasizes the importance of making proper objections in court . He said:

I think when I was able to make proper objections, I think that's one of the positive experiences (FGD3: SS74).

Participant 2 reflected on the significance of effective courtroom strategies, particularly in facilitating resolutions that benefit all parties involved. He shared:

One of the most significant accomplishments is that when you were able to persuade the parties to agree or to enter into amicable settlement, because less hassle and expenses for both parties and also for the court, less ducats (IDI2: SS15).

Finally, Participant 7 also reflected on a fulfilling experience as a defense counsel, highlighting the importance of balancing legal strategies with the protection of a client's future. He shared:

When I was able to persuade the complainant, because I was the lawyer for the defendant at that time, the defendant was ready to make a plea, so, I was able to persuade the complainant to enter into amicable settlement. I think that's one of the most fulfilling moments in my life. (FGD3: SS73).

**Weaving the Tapestry of Precision.** This theme emphasizes the nature of the legal field, where new criminal lawyers must be accurate and meticulous in order to succeed. Participant 2 highlighted the importance of preparation and readiness, sharing:

If you are prepared, you are able to read the cases, whatever happens in the courtroom, you can just offer stability (IDI2: SS23).

Participant 5 shared insights on the precision required in mastering the art of working with witnesses and presenting evidence convincingly. He stated:

During my early courtroom engagements, the first few hearings that I attended in a criminal case, probably what is most satisfying is when you are able to extract from the witness the point that you want to get delivered or to be heard by the judge, because there is a challenge in presenting a witness because witnesses have different personalities. Some are not very cooperative or some are easily nervous. That's why some become blacked out, so it is a challenge for the lawyer in talking with the witness before presenting him or her, and as a defense, when you are also cross-examining a witness, when you are able to ask the right questions. That would be satisfying and also fulfilling and somehow positive for me (FGD1: SS51).

Lastly, Participant 2 emphasized that preparation is key for lawyers to navigate the uncertainty of court proceedings while maintaining composure and projecting confidence. This, in turn, inspires trust in their client and potentially strengthens their case. He stated:

If you are prepared, you are able to read the cases, whatever happens in the courtroom, you can just offer stability (IDI2: SS23).

## B. Negative Experiences

**Navigating the Labyrinth of Law.** This theme examines the multifaceted challenges that new criminal lawyers encounter when moving from legal education to real-world courtroom practice. Participant 4 conveyed feelings of being overwhelmed by the complexities of the legal system, stating:

While serving as a private prosecutor attorney, considering that the burden of proof rests with our side, it is really difficult to prove a case. A simple lapse in the testimony of a witness is crucial to the prosecution of the case. As counsel for the defense, the common defense of an accused is denial which, based on my realization, is a very weak defense (IDI4: SS43).

Participant 8 discussed the struggle to grasp the various legal terminologies and procedural requirements, highlighting the necessity of thorough preparation. He shared:

I remember my first few cases; I spent countless hours just reading and trying to grasp the legal language. It was like learning a new dialect, and every time I thought I understood it, there was always something new that would trip me up (FGD4: SS101).

Participant 7 highlighted the difficulty of understanding the various legal terminologies and procedural requirements, emphasizing the importance of thorough preparation. He remarked:

Time management. It's one of the obstacles, especially when you handle other cases also. You have to find time to be prepared and be keen on the details of the case (FGD3: SS78).

Finally, Participant 5 discussed the importance of mentorship in overcoming these challenges, stating:

I am inspired to provide the best legal service that I can. Of course, in criminal law, it is in your hands the life or the liberty of an accused. If you're for the defense, if you're for the prosecution, if you are to uphold the interest of the state in preventing crime or in penalizing crime. So, when you want to be the best that you can, you will have to do everything. You have to learn, you have to read, you have to consult, and you will have to keep abreast with the latest jurisprudence, the latest laws, and the latest amendments and then the development of your character will follow (FGD1: SS62).

**The Symphony of Counsel and Resilience.** This theme emphasizes how the emotional difficulties and the fortitude needed in the legal field interact. Participant 8 emphasized that because courtroom procedures are

unknown to him, he feels scared and apprehensive. He can get past this, though, by maintaining his confidence even when he is unsure. Over time, this strategy and experience-gaining can help him grow in confidence. He stated:

One common hurdle is conquering my inner fears, because as a new lawyer, it's like going to the world of the unknown in every hearing. We have several what-ifs, we have several questions, and we do not know, we haven't undergone all the stages of the proceedings, and so conquering that fear within you, and then facing your client, facing the court, facing the judge with that confidence that you should have, but it's really faking it until you make it (FGD4: SS89).

Participant 9 said that the legal system has limits and it is frustrating when you think your client should have a different result but can't do anything because they were found not guilty. He explained:

One of the most satisfying I guess was when I handled the case that I was surprised because the prosecution introduced a witness without my knowledge and the judge at that time permitted it (FGD5: SS98).

Furthermore, Participant 2 discussed the emotional toll of navigating uncertainties in early-stage practice, particularly regarding legal arguments and the judge's role. He remarked:

One of the typical challenges that I encountered in criminal law is that, one, first is the pleadings. What specific pleading we are going to file for this case or for this scenario, these circumstances are based on the resolution of the judge, something like that and also, I think the pleading and then the courtroom hearing (IDI2: SS16).

**Wading Through the Tempest of Expectations.** This theme explores the demands and expectations that nascent criminal attorneys must deal with throughout their formative years. According to Participant 5, criminal law is complex and necessitates more careful planning because of the more stringent standards for evidence and the difficulty of proving a high possibility of conviction right away. Compared to civil matters, this makes it harder for attorneys to effectively pursue criminal cases. He said:

Criminal law is more intricate than other aspects of law because in civil cases, you just file a complaint or you just file a petition in court, then that court will just issue summons to the other party. Whereas in criminal law, when you file a complaint with the prosecutor's office, you will have to hurdle the new circular of the DOJ, which is reasonable certainty of conviction. So, we lawyers, we now believe or I believe that it is more difficult to file a criminal case now than before. It is more difficult to find probable cause now than before. So, you will have to strengthen your complaint, your case, the very first time when you file it with the fiscal office. So that is one challenge that is intricate and unique to criminal law compared to other aspects of law (FGD1: SS56).

Participant 3 shared the frustrations that arise from encountering bureaucratic delays and procedural obstacles. He articulated the disappointment felt when the anticipated outcome was not achieved, saying:

In our laws, the public prosecutor is the one who is authorized to prosecute. As a private lawyer, you will only ask for an authority from the public prosecutor. Once they grant you as a private prosecutor, then that's it, you can prosecute. However, if the decision is acquitted and you are the private prosecutor, that means that the interest of your client or the justice that you seek is not attained by your client. Once acquittal is being rendered, there will be no appeal because the doctrine of double jeopardy will sit in. So, the problem now is how you are going to seek justice when there is already an acquittal. So, of course, there is a jurisprudence to that that you can file an action for certiorari under Rule 65. However, this is a criminal case and that case should be handled by a solicitor general based on my legal opinion. So, it is very hard to seek also the consent of that solicitor general or how are we going to file that. So, the hurdle there is just to seek legal knowledge because our knowledge of law is not everything, it's not all. We continue to study also in every case, in every scenario of the case. So that is a hurdle and how would you seek justice to your client if initially it was being deprived to you in your belief also (IDI3: SS32).

Finally, Participant 8 underscored the importance of integrating theoretical knowledge with practical experience to effectively navigate the intricacies of criminal law. He stated:

How did I navigate through the criminal law practice, number one is I asked my fellow lawyers and the experts, the veteran lawyers, on how they do things. Number two, reading the rules again, reading the books again and three is I know the judge. I go to the court and observe before my hearing. I observe the demeanor of the judge and how the other lawyers approach a certain situation and then also, I observe the other lawyers in the courtroom. We observe before hearings to listen what happened, and If I have time, I listen to the hearings after me and there, I will learn a lot from those veteran lawyers (FGD4: SS91).

### **Addressing the Challenges Encountered by the Participants during Their First Two Years of Legal Practice**

1. Carving Paths of Wisdom and Precision. This theme explores the strategies new criminal lawyers employ to enhance their legal skills through lifelong education and mentorship. Participant 5 emphasized the necessity of a multi-faceted approach in criminal law practice, stating:

Know the judge. You have to know his or her personality, what he or she likes, what is her style, his or her style. You have to read and read. We cannot pass law school without reading, and in law practice, we will not become successful in our practice if we do not read our pleadings, reread it, review it, let the client review it, and then make some changes, read the latest jurisprudence, read also the latest editions of law books if you can. Of course, we also have to refer to our senior lawyers, our fellow associates in the office. That is how, that is a strategy or some few strategies to overcome our challenges in criminal law practice (FGD1:SS58).

In addition, Participant 10 highlighted the foundational role of mentorship and continuous learning in building a successful legal career, remarking:

I think common to all our answers are that there's mentorship, that whatever mistakes, whatever happens, that we will always have that one veteran or experienced lawyer whom we ask questions, whom we ask guidance. Next is the constant learning that we read books, we update ourselves with the latest jurisprudence and lastly is to the rest (FGD6: SS123).

Finally, Participant 7 spoke to the importance of critical thinking and flexibility in legal practice, highlighting the need for strong analytical skills:

When you encounter clients, they have different scenarios or circumstances, which of those laws should apply or which of those apply to this certain client's circumstances or details that are needed (FGD3: SS76).

**The Pillars of Partnership and Trust.** This theme emphasizes the significance of collaboration and effective communication in achieving legal objectives. Participant 8 highlighted a common challenge faced by new lawyers, sharing:

One common hurdle is conquering my inner fears, because as a new lawyer, it's like going to the world of the unknown in every hearing. We have several what-ifs, we have several questions, and we do not know, we haven't undergone all the stages of the proceedings, and so conquering that fear within you, and then facing your client, facing the court, facing the judge with that confidence that you should have, but it's really faking it until you make it (FGD4: SS89).

On the other hand, Participant 8 further highlighted the value of consulting with lawyer friends in addition to personal preparation and study. He shared:

In addition to my experience, aside from preparation and in-study practice, I also consult some lawyer friends (FGD2: SS68).

Finally, in terms of building strong client relationships, Participant 4 exemplified the effectiveness of negotiation and persuasion in resolving cases amicably. He emphasized the importance of compromise, remarking:

Fulfilling moments, one of which is during, in a preliminary investigation proceeding before the office of the city prosecutor involving a case for violation of BP-22, attorney, I was able to persuade the complainant and his

counsel to enter into a compromise with my client, the defendant therein. I am honored that I was able to protect the interests of my client within the bounds of law and standard of ethical representation ( IDI4: SS39).

**The Dance of Triumph and Trial.** This theme looks at how inexperienced criminal attorneys handled their careers by taking lessons from both their courtroom triumphs and setbacks. Participant 8 talked about the value of integrating practical tactics like speaking with seasoned legal colleagues with personal routines like prayer for inner strength. He said:

My significant accomplishment, was the dismissal of a case because the defendant was innocent and the circumstances during that time were on our side because there were three instances wherein the complainant was not able to testify in court, he should testify on those three instances, but the complainant was not able to come to court hearings, and so God was on our side on acquitting or dismissing that case because he really knows that the defendant was innocent (FGD4: SS87).

Furthermore, Participant 6 expressed satisfaction with their successful representation of a client in a challenging situation, stating:

I was able to protect the interests of my client within the bounds of law. I stood with a veteran and a brilliant lawyer in the presence of many other lawyers and defense. I think that is very satisfying (FGD2: SS63).

Lastly, Participant 9 captured the essence of overcoming challenges through thorough investigation, stating:

Probably one of the most fulfilling moments was when I was able to find documents for a certain client. Because his case was actually going on for about 20 years. Most of his witnesses were already dead. Most of them were already incapacitated and in fact, even the complainants were already dead. It just so happened that I was able to find some documents that were already previously presented to court that I could use in his defense. It was fulfilling for me as a new lawyer because it was the first time I experienced the act of actual due diligence when representing my clients (FGD5: SS97).

### **Aspirations of Participants to Improve Their Legal Services during Their First Two Years of Legal Practice**

**The Beacon of Purpose and Principle.** This theme concerns the guiding principles that direct the practices of new criminal lawyers toward client-centered advocacy and commitment to procedural excellence. Participant 9 stressed how reaching for financial aspiration is closely tied with personal professional development and growth, thus stating:

I aspire to have more money. So, if I want more money, I need to improve myself to the point that I can actually you know, one of the be a competent lawyer. So, in order to achieve my goal or my aspirations to have more money, I need to improve myself as a lawyer (FGD5: SS11).

Additionally, Participant 2 highlighted continuous learning as a key element of success in the legal field, expressing:

Learning never stops, so it helps in developing skills and expansion of knowledge and at the same time will reinforce what we have learned from the previous lawyers work and senior lawyers (IDI2: SS25).

Finally, Participant 5 acknowledged the difficulties faced by new lawyers in the criminal law sector, emphasizing the importance of gaining confidence through hands-on experience. He noted:

I think the pressure is higher in criminal law than other aspects of law because you are dealing with the right and liberty of the person. Also, one of the hurdles I faced is the lack of confidence. As a new lawyer, you lack confidence, and then as time goes by, as you appear more often, you slowly gain confidence. That's one hurdle that I could say that I have overcome (FGD 1: SS55).

**The Garden of Growth and Knowledge.** This theme examines the significance of mentorship, peer learning,

---

and ongoing legal education in fostering the development of new criminal lawyers. Participant 5 conveyed the importance of experience and collaboration in achieving positive outcomes, stating:

For moments of progress, I could say that I have improved compared to the very first few weeks or months of being a lawyer. The aspect of case build-up is during your first few months, you would ask your senior what are the pieces of evidence that should be gathered. Then as you file the case, and then it becomes heard in the fiscal's office or preliminary investigation, during my first few months, I tried to handle a case collaborating with a classmate and then the case got dismissed. So, when I asked my senior lawyer what do lack, what evidence do lack, and then we refiled the case, then the fiscal's office found probable cause. So, you could say that that's a progress on your part. You learn by asking your seniors. So, we continue learning, continue asking our elder lawyers because we do not stop learning and that is progress (FGD1: SS52).

Participant 10 highlighted the necessity of lifelong learning in the legal profession, emphasizing that those who aspire to excel must commit to the continuous enhancement of their knowledge and skills. He remarked:

The role of learning and development in my practice, it's really a major factor and a major consideration to have. Because if you want to be a great lawyer, then you have to be a lawyer who constantly reads and learns and develops the knowledge that you have (FGD6: SS127).

Lastly, Participant 2 shared insights on how combining knowledge from experienced colleagues with personal reflection can deepen one's understanding of the law. He stated:

I just learned from the senior lawyers. You ask questions from your senior lawyers or your friends who are more experienced with the private practice or who are expert to criminal law or criminal cases and also learn from the experience, for example and in your first case, there was one case, was this case. So, you learn what the loopholes are or what are the negative of that, what are the instances nasayup ka or something, so, asa ka nagkulang. So, you learn from that (IDI2: SS20). (I just learned from the senior lawyers. You ask questions from your senior lawyers or your friends who are more experienced with the private practice or who are expert to criminal law or criminal cases. And also learn from the experience, for example. And in your first case, there was one case, was this case. So, you learn what the loopholes are or what are the negative of that, what are the instances you made a mistake or something. So, what did you miss? So, you learn from that).

**The Quest for Excellence.** This theme explored the commitment of new criminal lawyers to excellence through self-reflection and improvement. According to Participant 5, the practice of criminal law is demanding and the lawyer in this field is one who wants to provide the best service while being committed to lifelong learning and personal growth. He stated:

I am inspired to provide the best legal service that I can. Of course, in criminal law, it is in your hands the life or the liberty of an accused. If you're for the defense, if you're for the prosecution, if you are to uphold the interest of the state in preventing crime or in penalizing crime. So, when you want to be the best that you can, you will have to do everything. You have to learn, you have to read, you have to consult, and you will have to keep abreast with the latest jurisprudence, the latest laws, and the latest amendments and then the development of your character will follow (FGD1: SS62).

Participant 8 reflected on the moral dilemmas and emotional challenges lawyers face while handling sensitive cases, underscoring the necessity for professionalism and objectivity in the face of intense emotions. He remarked:

In prosecuting a case, for example, I tried a rape case. It contained the emotions of the father of the child who was raped. Who went to me and then he wanted to pursue the case. Whereas the mother who already had another partner, and then that partner did the crime on the daughter, pleaded that the case be, it's handling that and then also the emotions that I feel and then balancing it so that I will be more objective on the pleadings that I will prepare, and in defending the case, I tried also, one difficult thing there is proving all the elements of self-defense. Because in court, when we allege self-defense, it will be a reverse trial. So, it won't be the prosecutor anymore who will prove the case, it will be us that all the elements of self-defense are present and it's really so hard, especially if there are no available witness and less documents available (FGD4: SS90).

Participant 6 emphasized the importance of integrity and conscience in providing effective legal representation, stating:

I want to become a lawyer with integrity and with conscience and so I situate that the pleadings I'm drafting and the actions I'm taking will serve the best interests of my clients (FGD2: SS70).

## **Data Analysis**

The emergent themes were identified through the application of Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis methodology, a flexible and systematic approach to qualitative data analysis aimed at identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. This method was employed to rigorously examine each interview transcript from the life stories of new criminal lawyers, offering a structured framework for interpreting their personal narratives. Through systematic familiarization with the data, generation of initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing and defining themes, and finally producing the report, the analysis moved to deeper layers of their professional journey. This was the approach that helped find recurring patterns, key challenges, positive experiences, and aspirations that define the life world of new criminal lawyers as they navigate their early years of practice. By this means, the research seeks to yield authentic expressions and feelings as well as insights into their experiences, rich and nuanced.

## **Experiences of Participants during the First Two Years of Their Legal Practice**

### **A. Positive Experiences**

1. Forged in the Fires of Justice. The theme captures the life-changing experience that new criminal lawyers go through when they are exposed to high-stakes court cases, which sharpens their skills and challenges their fortitude. These lawyers get the crucible they require to develop into more formidable defenders of justice through their early experiences with complicated cases. Professional advancement, emotional fortitude, and skill improvement all contribute to its progression.

The American Bar Association (2025) emphasizes that to become a great trial advocate, a lawyer must feel inspired by the heritage of advocacy and pursue competence in all aspects of the profession. Furthermore, the ABA notes that the full range of a lawyer's skills are tested in the intense and demanding adversary courtroom setting, where the lawyer's conduct becomes visibly essential to the judicial process.

Furthermore, The Advocates' Society (2018) refers to the mentorship relationship as one where knowledge and skills gained through experience are passed from one advocate to another. This is especially vital when practical opportunities for gaining experience in low-risk circumstances are limited, meaning high-stakes cases serve as that intense, high-impact learning environment.

Moreover, the University of Houston Law Center (n.d.) states that advocacy programs instill the competence and the confidence to step into a courtroom from day one of a career, teaching the skills essential to effectively representing clients. This confidence and strategic awareness is critical for the advocate dealing with the performance pressure created by the expectations of the judge, jury, and client in high-stakes litigation.

Finally, as noted by the Oregon State Bar (2011), the formal mentoring plan for new lawyers includes core concepts and experiences that introduce practical aspects of lawyering necessary for successful and professional practice. Senior lawyers model strategic thinking and help new lawyers focus on substantive areas to build basic skills, thus helping them overcome their first obstacles in the workplace.

2. Mastering the Art of Advocacy. A very rewarding part of beginning a legal career is learning advocacy techniques, which gives new lawyers a great sense of achievement as they advance in their capacity to effectively represent clients. The foundation of a lawyer's professional development is their mastery of negotiating tactics, courtroom tactics, and compelling reasoning. A major turning point in one's advocacy career is gaining the self-assurance to appear in front of a judge and jury and make a compelling case for a client.

According to Mauet (2016), a foundational text in trial practice, every lawyer hoping to succeed in criminal

litigation must possess the fundamental abilities of thorough preparation and flexibility during cross-examination. The dynamic nature of the courtroom frequently necessitates quick thinking and strategic turning, so these abilities require a great deal of practice and thorough study. New attorneys soon discover that the art of advocacy involves both preparation and adjusting to the unpredictability of trials.

Stuntz (2011), in his analysis of the criminal justice system, underscores the significance of trial practice and the observation of seasoned litigators as vital aids for new lawyers. Young lawyers can learn effective advocacy techniques from seeing more experienced lawyers handle challenging issues, particularly in areas dealing with complex constitutional and procedural rules. They can then modify and apply these lessons to their own practice, internalizing persuasive strategies and developing a theory-and practice-informed advocacy art.

Lastly, as Posner (1995) noted, advocacy mastery is a lifelong process of development and improvement rather than a single accomplishment. Every case has its own set of difficulties, therefore attorneys must constantly adjust and improve their techniques. This engaging educational experience, which includes recognizing the strategic constraints and incentives within the system, guarantees that aspiring criminal attorneys are prepared to represent their clients with conviction and expertise, signaling the start of a fulfilling career.

**3. Weaving the Tapestry of Precision.** This theme encapsulates their sense of pride and fulfillment. These lawyers understand early in their careers that being meticulous is not only necessary but also empowering since it boosts their confidence and establishes their credibility in the courts when they create pleadings, evaluate evidence, and formulate legal arguments with accuracy.

Saks and Koehler (2005) discussed the role of forensic evidence in criminal defense as complex and highly susceptible to error if not properly understood. For new criminal lawyers, this need for precise analysis becomes a significant skill in examining evidence, spotting inconsistencies, and challenging elements about admissibility and reliability. Such mastering of the skills process, therefore allows them to expose details which may win cases, improve their analytic faculties, and enhance their argumentation skills.

Enhancing accuracy in legal practice has also been demonstrated to enhance critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. Fischl and Paul (2009) stressed that a lawyer's analytical skills are enhanced by their attention to detail, especially in complex criminal cases where even the smallest information can make all the difference. By embracing these qualities of precision, new attorneys find a deep sense of success because their work exemplifies the focus and rigor necessary for practicing law.

A new criminal lawyer learns how a technically flawless approach is not only possible in an evidence management context while researching or trying court records but also comes forth through the experiences of evidence handling, court record surveying, and practice of arguments. Devotion to correctness becomes something more than a characteristic identifying professionalism and marks development of an individual in terms of not just competence but integrity, as well.

### **Negative Experiences**

**1. Navigating the Labyrinth of Law.** Early experiences in the legal field are sometimes compared by new criminal attorneys to traversing a maze, where the intricacy of case management, legal procedures, and the sheer amount of information can be daunting. As people start to struggle with the complex and sometimes subtle requirements of criminal law, it is typical to feel "lost" in the legal system.

Rhode (2015) emphasizes how new attorneys experience cognitive overload when they first start practicing law, particularly in criminal law where the learning curve is fast and the stakes are high. It might be difficult for many people to discover a clear way forward because of the overwhelming number of statutes, procedural regulations, and case details. Early-career attorneys are humbled and inspired by the knowledge that the complexity and rigor of criminal law are highlighted by this first experience of cognitive strain.

According to Krieger (2002), procedural law presents a unique obstacle for novice criminal attorneys because of its stringent procedures and deadlines, which call for accuracy and self-control. Young attorneys must negotiate a labyrinth of technical requirements while simultaneously growing their understanding of substantive

law, which exacerbates the impression of being "lost," since they must rapidly grasp these procedural norms. As pointed out, the stress of handling several cases at once, each with its own needs and intricacies, exacerbates this rapid learning curve.

In addition, Susskind (2013) contends that new lawyers encounter challenges in case management, where juggling evidence, client expectations, and court timetables calls for both flexibility and strategic thinking. Even though they may seem overwhelming at first, early exposure to these difficulties gives aspiring criminal attorneys the fortitude and problem-solving abilities necessary for success in the industry, often forcing them to adopt better organizational tools.

The bewildering "legal labyrinth" experience is therefore not just a rite of passage but also a process that develops expertise and confidence. Overcoming these obstacles helps new lawyers gain a practical grasp of the complexities of the legal system and eventually learn how to handle its complexity with more confidence. This path from inexperience to mastery illustrates how legal practice is transforming, as new criminal attorneys develop with each case, becoming more knowledgeable and clear-headed at every turn.

**2. The Symphony of Counsel and Resilience.** The theme captures the emotional toll that new criminal attorneys endure when juggling difficult caseloads, client expectations, and the unrelenting demands of court schedules. Similar to a symphony, the experience is a dynamic fusion of highs and lows in terms of emotions, with each "movement" signifying a distinct difficulty. Although this path gradually increases resilience, it frequently has a severe and ongoing emotional cost.

According to Schiltz (1999), the demanding nature of criminal cases can frequently lead to heightened stress levels and, in certain situations, clinical depression or burnout. This article examines the extreme emotional demands that early-career criminal lawyers face, noting that the profession's culture often exacerbates these issues. In situations where attorneys must assist clients who face dire repercussions, this is very noticeable and puts a significant emotional strain on individuals who are new to the field. Early professional development for young lawyers is largely shaped by the need to maintain mental stability in the face of high-stakes results, which presents a challenge for them to adjust and endure under duress.

Additionally, Rhode (2015), in her critical examination of the legal profession, highlighted the substantial personal sacrifices and psychological distress that young criminal attorneys frequently undertake in order to live up to professional standards. Longer workdays, lost personal time, and emotional exhaustion are common outcomes of the desire to achieve and establish credibility. Feelings of stress and tension are made worse by the constant pressure to perform under close scrutiny without enough time or resources for recuperation. Rhode points out that these difficulties are more severe in criminal law because of the extraordinarily high stakes for both clients and their attorneys.

This "symphony" of emotional and professional difficulties is therefore a natural element of the early years of practicing criminal law, forming the personal identities and resilience of new attorneys. They demonstrate a path of resilience developed from real-world experiences as they adjust, persevere, and develop in their professions; each obstacle they conquer adds a new "note" to their symphony.

**3. Wading Through the Tempest of Expectations.** New criminal lawyers find their path is like navigating a storm of demands from bosses, clients, and themselves. They feel a great deal of strain because of these expectations, which are frequently unattainable given their lack of resources and experience. The weighty load of "having to prove themselves" usually causes stress and feelings of inadequacy as they attempt to handle complex issues with little direction and only fundamental abilities.

Gottlieb, H. (1993), in analyzing the pressures on attorneys, pointed out that the desire for perfection and the fear of failure are deeply ingrained in legal training and practice, leading to significant self-imposed stress. This internal pressure combines with external client demands who often have an intense, immediate need for legal success to create an unmanageable psychological burden on novice lawyers. The clash between the professional ideal and practical reality is a core source of early career dissatisfaction and anxiety.

**Additionally, Binder and Price (2007) emphasize the difficulty of managing client expectations in criminal law,**  
Page 1336

noting that clients often come to the lawyer with unrealistic goals and a profound lack of trust in the system. The new lawyer is tasked with the difficult job of reality-testing for the client while still maintaining a supportive relationship, a delicate and high-stress communication challenge that adds to the daily pressures of the job.

As new criminal lawyers eventually learn to control expectations and develop resilience, navigating this storm also offers chances for development. They develop abilities that will benefit them in their jobs as a result of this process, which also helps them understand their boundaries and priorities better. Their professional and personal identities are thus shaped by the voyage, which is both difficult and transforming.

### **Addressing the Challenges Encountered by the Participants during Their First Two Years of Legal Practice**

**1. Carving Paths of Wisdom and Precision.** New criminal lawyers start to "carve paths" of professional development in the difficult early years of their employment, progressively honing their craft and acquiring the knowledge necessary to handle the complexities of criminal law. This theme centers on their professional development where they employ effective strategies to help them become more accurate in legal circumstances and strengthen their legal acumen.

Formal legal education provides a necessary foundation, but hands-on experiential learning is crucial for developing practical competence in criminal law. Studies show that when new attorneys are exposed to the complexities of real-world cases, they begin to internalize criminal procedures and the rules of evidence in a way that theoretical study alone cannot achieve, effectively bridging the gap between doctrine and practice (Getches, 2009). This application-based experience contributes to a more subtle and practical understanding of criminal law by enabling emerging experts to develop skills like client counseling, ethical decision-making, and effective communication essential for legal practice.

The legal field is constantly evolving, making continuing legal education (CLE) indispensable for novice attorneys. While some debate the effectiveness of mandatory CLE, the activities themselves are intended to enhance professional competence, improve ethical compliance, and help lawyers stay current on new statutes, case precedents, and ethical standards (Schein, 2020). By actively participating in seminars and workshops, attorneys better navigate intricate legal frameworks, boosting their confidence in court and while communicating with clients. For new criminal lawyers, this ongoing education process is essential for developing accuracy and judgment in legal decision-making.

Furthermore, the function of mentoring in the professional growth of new lawyers is a powerful factor in honing both knowledge and accuracy. New lawyer mentoring programs often include core activities designed to introduce the novice attorney to the legal community and the practical application of ethics, civility, and professional skills, providing essential practical guidance (Wallin, 2013). Through mentorship, young attorneys can absorb and witness excellent practices in areas like case management, client relations, and court etiquette, benefiting from their mentors' practical experience, which often speeds up the process of becoming a skilled practitioner.

During this process of "carving paths," new criminal attorneys have the ability to handle cases with nuanced understanding in addition to enhanced technical proficiency. Their professional identities are shaped by this process of improvement, which progressively makes them more accurate and tenacious legal advocates.

**2. The Pillars of Partnership and Trust.** The first few years of practicing criminal law can be intimidating and lonely for new attorneys; but, the support system of peers and clients, professional connections, and mentorship provides a solid foundation. This topic emphasizes how important it is to work together, with mentors and colleagues offering young attorneys direction, assurance, and useful counsel to help them handle the challenges of the legal field with more integrity and confidence.

A thorough study on the effects of mentorship on lawyers in their early careers has demonstrated how this relationship provides both career direction and emotional resilience. Mentors frequently assist young attorneys in handling moral conundrums and complex client interactions, two areas that can be especially difficult for individuals new to the practice (Rhode, 2013). Young attorneys benefit greatly from the advice mentors give

them in order to make wise decisions, develop their professional identity, and steer clear of typical pitfalls, reinforcing the profession's responsibility to nurture newcomers.

Similarly, research has explored the collaborative aspect of practicing law and highlighted how working with more seasoned colleagues greatly reduces the stress that new attorneys encounter. A lack of perceived organizational support and erosion of professional collegiality are directly linked to higher rates of psychological stress and burnout in lawyers (Chlap & Brown, 2022). Working with dependable coworkers allows young attorneys to benefit from the experience of others, which offers a vital network of support when dealing with challenging situations, fostering a sense of community within the field, and enhancing overall well-being.

These foundations of collaboration and trust become important to the professional and personal growth of new criminal lawyers, establishing a support system that increases fortitude, and inspires self-assurance. These collaborations are not only advantageous but also necessary in a setting where the stakes are high, enabling new attorneys to develop under the insight and direction of their mentors and peers.

**3. The Dance of Triumph and Trial.** For new criminal lawyers, the experience of early practice is always a sensitive balance between winning moments and inevitable losses accompanying those moments. This theme portrays a constant cycle of growth based on victories and losses as every experience-be it winning in court or a sudden unexpected challenge-shapes legal acumen and resilience.

A thorough study on the effects of mentorship on lawyers, particularly focusing on how it builds professional resilience, has demonstrated its vital role in early career success. Mentors frequently assist young attorneys in handling moral ambiguities, ethical dilemmas, and complex client interactions, areas that can be especially difficult for individuals new to practice. This guided relationship helps lawyers develop their professional identity, and the mentor's support and advice are crucial for making sound decisions and preventing common missteps (Kram, 1985).

Research exploring the collaborative aspect of practicing law highlights the significant role of peer support in reducing the high levels of stress new attorneys often encounter. For new attorneys still gaining confidence, professional ties among colleagues are essential for promoting a sense of security and mutual respect. Working collaboratively allows young lawyers to benefit from shared knowledge and emotional support, which is critical when dealing with challenging or emotionally taxing cases, thereby helping to mitigate burnout and fostering a sense of community (Schiltz, 1999).

Therefore, the "dance of triumph and trial" is more than a straightforward back-and-forth movement between success and failure but rather a rhythm that describes the professional journey of the new criminal lawyers.

### **Aspirations of Participants to Improve Their Legal Services during Their First Two Years of Legal Practice**

**1. The Beacon of Purpose and Principle.** The quest for justice for a new criminal lawyer is a path beyond professional goals but instead one fueled by high ethical principles and zeal for equity. This theme captures how the purpose that pushes the lawyers forward becomes a guiding function even in the sometimes hostile scenarios of criminal law. These ideals, upholding integrity and the rights of persons, shine as a beacon at every juncture they make as they navigate ethical dilemmas and complex cases.

Research has explored the ethical reasons driving many young criminal lawyers forward, suggesting that their motivation stems from a strong adherence to professionalism and ethical standards. This commitment provides an essential ethical framework that guides young lawyers to just conclusions, particularly when faced with moral dilemmas regarding client representation or court conduct. This foundational adherence to professionalism becomes essential as new lawyers navigate the challenges of the profession, helping them to focus on the core values of upholding the rule of law and protecting client rights (Sullivan, 2007).

Additionally, literature has examined how having a clear sense of purpose enables a lawyer to successfully negotiate the pressures and moral complications that come with practicing criminal law. Attorneys are better equipped to manage the psychological demands of the profession when they align their work with a strong moral

compass and dedication to ethical practice. This strong sense of purpose guides them through the more tumultuous parts of practicing law, enabling them to maintain professional fulfillment despite the inherent difficulties of the criminal justice system (Kronman, 1993).

Through this theme, it is clear that the impetus to maintain justice and ethical standards is at the heart of the professional identity of new criminal lawyers.

**2. The Garden of Growth and Knowledge.** Professional excellence is a journey for most new criminal lawyers as an ever-evolving process of learning and self-improvement. This theme speaks of constant improvement wherein every case, court appearance, and professional interaction offers opportunities to improve themselves. New lawyers are of the view that their ability to acquire more legal knowledge and their further development of skills would serve to not only ensure success for themselves but also result in fair dispensation of justice by them.

The importance of a flexible and adaptable mindset in the face of demanding professional environments is well-established. Carol Dweck's foundational work in *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* (2006) indicates that the successful new lawyer would be one who consciously adopts a growth mindset, seeking knowledge through ongoing education and professional development. The most resilient new lawyers would be those prioritizing advanced training, legal workshops, and regarding each case as an opportunity to learn. The "growth mindset" encourages both confidence and competency for new lawyers in dealing with the dynamic pressures involved in criminal defense.

Intellectual curiosity and adaptability are qualities no successful lawyer can do without. As Bryan A. Garner argues in *The Winning Brief* (2014), a lawyer's commitment to mastering communication and legal technique demonstrates the required intellectual rigor. The uncertainty of criminal law is better handled by new lawyers who are continually working to broaden their knowledge and improve their legal abilities. This commitment to education not only increases their legal knowledge but can also improve their job happiness, as it makes them feel more equipped and confident to handle challenging cases (Gerstman, 2012).

Thus, the theme symbolizes much more than the accumulation of skills; it represents a fundamental approach to the profession: new criminal lawyers cultivate their expertise and adapt to an ever-changing environment. In addition to advancing careers, this attitude of constant learning improves one's ability to effectively advocate in a legal environment that is becoming more and more complicated.

**3. The Quest for Excellence.** Aspirations for excellence drive the path taken by new criminal lawyers, who must reflect on their experiences and create strategic approaches to their profession. This subject exemplifies the twin path of self-discovery and professional development, emphasizing the importance of strategic preparation and reflection in reaching success in the legal industry.

Lawyers who are reflective are better able to identify their strengths and shortcomings, which is vital for handling the complex challenges inherent in criminal law practice. This focus on reflection is a core component of modern legal education designed to improve a lawyer's professional judgment (Leering, 2014).

Thus, new criminal lawyers can strategically position themselves for long-term success by developing a culture of self-awareness and ongoing development that complements their core legal knowledge and advocacy skills. Success in the legal industry is not merely a function of technical ability but is deeply rooted in the capacity for continuous personal and professional growth, making a commitment to both strategy and reflection the ultimate quest for professional excellence (Rhode, 2015).

Thus, new criminal lawyers can position themselves for success by developing a culture of self-awareness and ongoing development in addition to honing their craft.

## **SUMMARY, FINDINGS, AND IMPLICATIONS**

This chapter provides the overview from which the themes were derived, the conclusions that emerged from the interview procedure and the ensuing data analysis, and the conclusions that were formed from the study.

## **Summary**

This study explored the life world of new criminal lawyers in Dumaguete City.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following sub-problems:

1. What are the experiences of the participants during the first two years of their legal practice?
2. How do the participants address the challenges they encountered during the first two years of their legal practice?
3. What are the aspirations of the participants to improve their legal services?

This study utilized the qualitative research method employing phenomenological research design. Likewise, this study was conducted in Dumaguete City, Negros Island Region. There were ten (10) new criminal lawyers who are engaged in legal practice in Dumaguete City as the participants of the study. Four participants were subject for Individual Discussion and another Six (6) participants were subject for Focus Group Discussion. The participants were chosen in accordance with the following pre-determined criteria: (a) participants are engaged in legal practice in Dumaguete City, (b) participants are handling at least five (5) criminal cases, and (c) participants have been practicing law for at least two (2) years.

As the instrument of the study, Interview Guide (IG) along an informed consent form was used in the data gathering process. During the data collecting process, the researcher also armed with an audio recorder and field notes to contain and preserve the information divulge by the participants. Both the individuals' and focus group discussions' verbatim statement from the participants were treated with confidentiality. It was decided that Edmund Husserl's(1990) transcendental phenomenology method would be the most suitable for discussing about the phenomenon with the employment of Braun and Clarke (2006) method of data.

In order to get crucial information from the principal participants, the researcher asked them probing and open-ended questions.

## **Findings**

Significant statements were incorporated to generate One hundred twenty- seven(127) formulated core meanings . Twenty-nine (29) cluster themes from the ninety three (93) stated core meanings were identified, reorganized, and classified into twelve (12) emergent themes as follow

In the first sub-problem, six themes are drawn, categorizing both positive and negative experiences of new criminal lawyers. The positive experiences are captured in the themes: Forged in the Fires of Justice, Mastering the Art of Advocacy, and Weaving the Tapestry of Precision. These themes capture the satisfying experiences that new criminal lawyers have when they first start practicing law. The participants related stories of rapid learning, development, and career mastery. They talked about the life-changing process of improving their legal knowledge, learning how to properly represent their clients, and becoming extremely detail-oriented, all of which influenced their identities as new justice advocates. Therefore, new criminal lawyers conveyed a feeling of satisfaction and success.

On the other hand, the challenges are encapsulated in the themes: Navigating the Labyrinth of Law, The Symphony of Counsel and Resilience, and Wading Through the Tempest of Expectations. By exhibiting perseverance these themes capture the difficulties faced by new criminal lawyers as they adjust to the complexities of the practice of law.

The second sub-problem reveals three themes, namely: Carving Paths of Wisdom and Precision, The Pillars of Partnership and Trust, and The Dance of Triumph and Trial. These themes show how new criminal lawyers manage to balance developing their legal knowledge, building relationships of trust and cooperation within their professional networks, and enduring the highs and lows of their early legal careers.

Lastly, the third sub-problem uncovers three themes, namely: The Beacon of Purpose and Principle, The Garden

of Growth and Knowledge, and The Quest for Excellence. The goals of new criminal lawyers are highlighted by these themes, which center on their desire to live up to their core beliefs, seek out further education, and aim for professional greatness via introspection and calculated choices.

## **Implications**

### **Implications for Practice**

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations, proposals, and methods for implementation are suggested in light of the detailed discussion of the primary issues:

**Support Mechanisms for New Criminal Lawyers.** According to the research, new criminal lawyers face many difficulties in their early years of practice. In order to overcome these challenges, law firms need to set up all-encompassing support networks that include resources for mental health and well-being, professional growth opportunities, and mentorship. Establishing a supportive atmosphere is crucial because it gives aspiring attorneys the skills they need to handle the challenges of their positions, increasing their resilience and general job satisfaction. These kinds of programs can help create a supportive environment that recognizes the particular difficulties experienced by new legal practitioners.

**Enhancing Support for New Criminal Lawyers through the Young Lawyers Association of Cebu (YLAC), Inc.** Based on the study's findings, the Young Lawyers Association of Cebu (YLAC) is urged to create specialized support efforts for its members. Creating tailored seminars, workshops, and mentorship programs to address the unique challenges faced by aspiring criminal attorneys is part of this. By applying the acquired knowledge, YLAC might develop a framework that promotes its members' professional development, confidence, and advocacy abilities. By making sure that prospective attorneys are prepared to face the difficulties of practicing law, YLAC will be able to fulfill its purpose of improving member welfare and supporting the legal profession.

**Personalized Legal Education for New Criminal Lawyers.** For new criminal lawyers, specialized training programs are essential to their professional development. Law firms must create training programs and workshops that particularly address the particular difficulties that these practitioners encounter, such as handling cases, communicating with clients effectively, and resolving moral quandaries. Law Firms can enable new lawyers to gain practical skills, boost their self-confidence, and enhance their performance by offering them focused training.

**Integrating Practical Training in Legal Education.** Legal education providers should incorporate perspectives from new criminal lawyers into their curricula to better prepare prospective new attorneys for the realities of the legal profession. By giving new lawyers the skills they need to meet the obstacles they will face in practice, these experiential learning opportunities can help them transfer more smoothly from academic to professional settings.

**Capturing the Experiences of New Criminal Lawyers.** The results highlight the necessity of continuing studies on the experiences of new criminal lawyers. By documenting their experiences, the corpus of information about professional development and legal education best practices will grow, creating a more knowledgeable and encouraging legal community. Furthermore, disseminating these recorded experiences may encourage structural adjustments within the legal industry.

**Development of Training Programs by the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP).** The study's findings should be used by the IBP to create specialized training courses for aspiring criminal attorneys. These programs might include resources aimed at the particular difficulties of criminal practice, continuing legal education (CLE) classes, and mentorship possibilities. The integrity of the legal system can be strengthened by the IBP by meeting the unique needs of new attorneys and enabling them to contribute significantly to their communities and the legal profession.

**Strengthening Judicial Support for New Criminal Lawyers through Supreme Court Initiatives.** The results of this study indicate that the Supreme Court should think about enacting rules and programs that better assist the training of new criminal attorneys. The Court could put in place regulations that support professional

development, capacity-building, and mentoring among attorneys by having a better knowledge of the difficulties these practitioners encounter.

**Supportive Judicial Systems for New Criminal Lawyers.** Courts must put in place systems that assist novice attorneys in their work. This can involve giving advice on how to proceed in court, making sure that necessary resources are available, and encouraging mentorship between inexperienced attorneys and seasoned judges.

**Encouraging Diversity in the Legal Workforce.** The Department of Justice (DOJ) ought to create plans to draw in and keep a broad group of new criminal lawyers. The Department can carry out programs that encourage diversity in the legal profession by comprehending the particular difficulties encountered by people from various backgrounds. In addition to improving representation, this guarantees a wider variety of viewpoints in the practice of law, which helps all groups have better access to justice.

**Increasing Community Understanding of New Criminal Lawyers' Challenges.** Lawyers and community organizations should work together to create public education campaigns about the role of criminal attorneys and the complexity of their work. Pro bono work, legal aid programs, and other resources that improve underprivileged populations' access to justice can be supported by such initiatives.

**Building a Foundation for Future Research on New Criminal Lawyers' Professional Growth.** Future researchers who wish to investigate the experiences and professional growth of new criminal lawyers can build upon this work. Building on these findings, future studies can explore particular facets of individual experiences in greater detail and unearth new information that can guide legal practice and education. Future scholars can support the continuous advancement of the legal profession by consistently adding to the corpus of information on this topic.

## **Implications for Future Studies**

The researcher suggests carrying out in-depth investigations into the following topics:

**Navigating Ethical Challenges: The Experiences of New Criminal Lawyers.** Determining how new criminal lawyers handle moral conundrums in their work is essential to the idea of being a "Vanguard of Justice." This research could look at particular ethical dilemmas they encounter, the choices they make, and the resources they have at their disposal. Common ethical dilemmas and coping mechanisms can be found by looking over case studies and conducting interviews. The findings would significantly inform legal education and training programs, ensuring future lawyers are better equipped to handle ethical complexities. This emphasis on ethics is vital for the reinstatement of new lawyers' commitment to justice.

**Mental Health and Well-being of New Criminal Lawyers: A Qualitative Study.** There is also a need to research more into the mental health and well-being of legal professionals, especially in the more demanding fields of criminal law, as part of their life world. It may be appropriate to research the psychological impact of their experiences in practice in relation to strategies for stress management and workplace support. In knowing the mental health challenges these new lawyers face and the stigma of mental health in legal fields, one could develop resources and interventions to foster wellness among new lawyers.

**The Role of Mentorship in the Development of New Criminal Lawyers.** Investigating the impact of mentorship on the professional development of new criminal lawyers will give insight into their journey as the vanguards of justice. This research can further explore the kinds of mentorship relationships that are more beneficial, how these influence skill development, confidence, and overall career trajectories.

**Understanding the Life World of New Criminal Lawyers: A Phenomenological Study.** A focused phenomenological study on the life world of new criminal lawyers would enter into their lived experiences, perceptions, and feelings as they work through the complexities of criminal law. It can explore how the background, aspirations, and values shape identity and influence professional roles. By capturing the essence of their experiences, researchers can provide insight into what it means to be a new criminal lawyer today. The findings of this study could inform training programs and support systems that resonate with the challenges and motivations of these practitioners.

Exploring Diversity and Inclusion in Criminal Law Practices. This study might look into how different viewpoints and backgrounds affect the experiences of aspiring criminal attorneys and the people they represent. Scholars can determine the obstacles encountered by underrepresented groups in the legal profession by investigating topics pertaining to race, gender, and socioeconomic background. The results may help shape laws intended to encourage diversity in law schools and practices, which would improve access to justice and the efficiency of legal counsel.

**The Impact of Work-Life Balance on New Criminal Lawyers.** Future research might look at how new criminal attorneys reconcile work and life despite the demanding nature of their line of employment. The methods they use to preserve their relationships and personal well-being while carrying out their work responsibilities could be the subject of this study. Gaining knowledge about the difficulties and achievements associated with work-life balance can help one better understand how these elements impact retention rates, job satisfaction, and general mental health. Recommendations derived from this research could inform law firms on implementing policies that support work-life balance, leading to healthier and more productive legal professionals.

**Technological Adaptation and Its Effects on Practice.** Research might concentrate on how new criminal attorneys adjust to technological advancements and their effects on practice, given the growing dependence of the legal profession on technology.

**Perceptions of Justice and the Role of Criminal Lawyers.** Examining how aspiring criminal attorneys view justice and their part in bringing it about might reveal important information about their driving forces and professional goals. This qualitative study could look at how people define justice for themselves, how their experiences have shaped these ideas, and how they think they can help create a just judicial system. The results could help guide professional development and legal education initiatives, promoting a better comprehension of the values that motivate aspiring attorneys as they start their professions.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The researchers would like to express their heartfelt appreciation to everyone who helped and advised them as they finished their thesis.

## **REFERENCES**

1. Caguioa, A. B. S. (2024, February 20). Justice Caguioa underscores the importance of ethical responsibility in the legal profession. Supreme Court of the Philippines. <https://sc.judiciary.gov.ph/justice-caguioa-underscores-the-importance-of-ethical-responsibility-in-the-legal-profession/>
2. Pike, C., & Quinlan, E. (2025). Lawyers' perspectives on how to manage the psychosocial risks they face in the legal assistance sector. *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law*, 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13218719.2024.2441789>
3. United Nations. (1990). Basic principles on the role of lawyers. Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Havana, Cuba.
4. Anker, J. J., & Krill, P. R. (2021). Stress, drink, leave: An examination of gender-specific risk factors for mental health problems and attrition among licensed attorneys. *PloS One*, 16(5), e0250563.
5. Andrews, T. R. (2004). Challenges to the legal profession in the new millennium. *Hitotsubashi Journal of Law and Politics*, 32, 37–60.
6. Bar Matter No. 850. (2000). Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) Program. Supreme Court of the Philippines.
7. Bess, M. (2025). Straight from the students: The impact of law school experiences on professional identity formation. *Marquette Law Review*, 108(3).
8. Caguioa, A. B. S. (2024, February 20). Justice Caguioa underscores the importance of ethical responsibility in the legal profession. Supreme Court of the Philippines. <https://sc.judiciary.gov.ph/justice-caguioa-underscores-the-importance-of-ethical-responsibility-in-the-legal-profession/>

9. DOJ Circular No. 015, s. 2024. (2024). 2024 Department of Justice-National Prosecution Service (DOJ-NPS) Rules on Preliminary Investigations and Inquest Proceedings. Department of Justice.
10. DOJ Circular No. 049, s. 2012. (2012). Code of professional responsibility and accountability of DOJ prosecutors. Department of Justice.
11. Dreyfus, S. E., & Dreyfus, H. L. (1986). *Mind over machine: The power of human intuition and expertise in the era of the computer*. Free Press.
12. Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. Random House.
13. Ericsson, K. A., Krampe, R. T., & Tesch-Römer, C. (1993). The role of deliberate practice in the acquisition of expert performance. *Psychological Review*, 100(3), 363–406.
14. Hamilton, N. W., & Bilionis, L. D. (2022). Law student professional development and formation: Bridging law school, student, and employer goals. NALP.
15. IE Insights. (2017, May 22). The new challenges of the legal profession and business world. <https://www.ie.edu/insights/articles/the-new-challenges-of-the-legal-profession-and-business-world/>
16. Krill, P. R., Degeneffe, N., Ochocki, K., & Anker, J. J. (2022). People, professionals, and profit centers: The connection between lawyer well-being and employer values. *Behavioral Sciences*, 12(6), 177. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs12060177>
17. Krill, P. R., Johnson, R., & Albert, L. (2016). The prevalence of substance use and other mental health concerns among American attorneys. *Journal of Addiction Medicine*, 10(1), 46–52.
18. Schiltz, P. J. (1999). On being a happy, healthy, and ethical member of an unhappy, unhealthy, and unethical profession. *Vanderbilt Law Review*, 52(4), 871–952.
19. Sullivan, W. M., Colby, A., Wegner, J. W., Bond, L., & Schrag, P. C. (2007). *Educating lawyers: Preparation for the profession of law*. Jossey-Bass.
20. Supreme Court of the Philippines. (2017). Revised guidelines for continuous trial in criminal cases (A.M. No. 15-06-10-SC).
21. Thomson, D. I. C. (2015). Defining experiential legal education. *Journal of Experiential Learning*, 1(1), Article 3.
22. United Nations. (1990). Basic principles on the role of lawyers. Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Havana, Cuba.
23. American Bar Association (2025). On Becoming a Great Trial Advocate. *Litigation Journal*, Winter 2025.
24. The Advocates' Society (2018). *Guide To Mentoring*. The Advocates' Society.
25. Oregon State Bar (2011). *New Lawyer Mentoring Program Manual*. Oregon State Bar.
26. University of Houston Law Center (n.d.). Chapter 6: Trial Advocacy. *Advocacy Survey*.
27. Mauet, T. A. (2016). *Trial Techniques and Trials* (9th ed.). Wolters Kluwer.
28. Posner, R. A. (1995). *Overcoming Law*. Harvard University Press.
29. Stuntz, W. J. (2011). *The Collapse of American Criminal Justice*. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
30. Fischl, R. S., & Paul, J. (2009). *Getting to Maybe: How to Excel on Law School Exams*. Carolina Academic Press.
31. Saks, M. J., & Koehler, J. J. (2005). The Coming Paradigm Shift in Forensic Identification Science. *Science*, 309(5736), 892-895.
32. Krieger, L. S. (2002). Institutional Denial about the Dark Side of Law School, and Fresh Empirical Evidence about Its Nurturing Side. *Journal of Legal Education*, 53(3), 232-262.
33. Rhode, D. L. (2015). *The Trouble with Lawyers*. Oxford University Press.
34. Susskind, R. (2013). *Tomorrow's Lawyers: An Introduction to Your Future*. Oxford University Press.
35. Rhode, D. L. (2015). *The Trouble with Lawyers*. Oxford University Press.
36. Schiltz, P. J. (1999). On Being a Happy, Healthy, and Ethical Member of an Unhappy, Unhealthy, and Unethical Profession. *Vanderbilt Law Review*, 52(4), 871–965.
37. Getches, D. (2009). What's new in legal education: experiential learning. *Colorado Law Scholarly Commons*, 2009, 1–11.
38. Schein, D. D. (2020). Mandatory continuing legal education: Productive or just PR? *Georgetown Journal of Legal Ethics*, 33(4), 1011–1050.
39. Wallin, P. (2013, October 23). Guest Blog: The Benefits of Mentoring a Law Student. *Chapman University Law Faculty Blog*.

40. Chlap, N., & Brown, R. (2022). Relationships between workplace characteristics, psychological stress, affective distress, burnout and empathy in lawyers. *International Journal of the Legal Profession*, 29(9), 1–22.
41. Rhode, D. L. (2013). *The Trouble with Lawyers*. Oxford University Press.
42. Kram, K. E. (1985). *Mentoring at work: Developmental relationships in organizational life*. Scott Foresman.
43. Schiltz, P. J. (1999). On being a happy, healthy, and ethical member of an unhappy, unhealthy, and unethical profession. *Vanderbilt Law Review*, 52(4), 871–955.
44. Kronman, A. T. (1993). *The Lost Lawyer: Failing Ideals of the Legal Profession*. Harvard University Press.
45. Sullivan, W. M. (2007). *Educating Lawyers: Preparation for the Profession of Law (The Carnegie Report)*. Jossey-Bass.
46. Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. Random House.
47. Garner, B. A. (2014). *The winning brief: 100 tips for persuasive briefing in trial and appellate courts* (3rd ed.). Oxford University Press.
48. Gerstman, D. (2012). *Professionalism: The third element of success*. ABA Publishing.
49. Leering, M. (2014). Conceptualizing reflective practice for legal professionals. *Journal of Law and Social Policy*, 23(1), 83–106.
50. Rhode, D. L. (2015). Foreword: Diversity in the legal profession: A comparative perspective. *Fordham Law Review*, 83(5), 1851–1863.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

#### Transmittal Letter

### Appendix B

#### Informed Consent Form

[Informed Consent for the Study on Vanguard of Justice: Life World of New Criminal Lawyers.]

[Name of Principal Investigator: Jim Peterick G. Sison]

[Name of Organization: University of Cebu]

[Name of Proposal: Vanguard of Justice: Life World of New Criminal Lawyers]

**This Informed Consent Form has two parts:**

- **Information Sheet (to share information about the research with you)**
- **Certificate of Consent (for signatures if you agree to take part)**

**You will be given a copy of the full Informed Consent Form**

#### PART I: Information Sheet

## INTRODUCTION

In the pursuit of justice, the role of legal practitioners cannot be overstated. They are not only agents of the law but also guardians of fairness and equity within society. This research delves into the life world of new criminal lawyers in Dumaguete City, Philippines. The title, "Vanguard of Justice: Life World of New Criminal Lawyers," encapsulates the essence of this study. It signifies the pivotal position these individuals hold in the local legal

ecosystem. Dumaguete City, nestled in the heart of the Visayas, serves as the canvas upon which their professional journey unfolds. In line with this, we are inviting you to be an interviewee/participant of this investigation and request you to spare few minutes of your time for a focus group discussion/interview at your convenient time and place. However, you do not have to decide immediately whether or not you will participate in this investigation since you are allowed to ask permission from colleagues or consult anyone in which you are comfortable with about the research. If there are contents in the interview guide that you do not understand and find ambiguous then feel free to contact and inform the researcher. Rest assured that all the answers/responses that you will provide will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

## **Purpose of the research**

The purpose of this research is to delve into the life world of new criminal lawyers in Dumaguete City, Philippines, with a focus on understanding their experiences, challenges, and aspirations within the legal profession. Through qualitative inquiry, the study aims to illuminate the lived experiences of these legal practitioners, providing insight into their daily realities, professional interactions, and personal journeys within the legal profession. By identifying the challenges faced by new criminal lawyers in Dumaguete City, the research seeks to highlight areas where support, resources, and reforms may be needed to enhance their effectiveness and well-being within the legal system. Additionally, the study endeavors to explore the aspirations and goals of these lawyers, shedding light on their motivations, career trajectories, and visions for contributing to the pursuit of justice in Dumaguete City and beyond. Through its findings, the research aims to inform policymakers, legal practitioners, and stakeholders about the realities of legal practice in Dumaguete City, thus contributing to the improvement of professional development opportunities, access to justice, and the overall legal ecosystem. Ultimately, this research also contributes to the academic discourse on legal professions, access to justice, and the sociology of law, enriching scholarly understanding of the complexities and nuances of legal practice in a localized context.

## **Type of Research Intervention**

This research adopts a face-to-face focus group discussion/interview approach to gather rich and nuanced insights into the life world of new criminal lawyers in Dumaguete City. By convening participants in person, the study aims to create a dynamic and interactive environment conducive to open dialogue and deeper exploration of the participants' experiences, challenges, and aspirations within the legal profession.

## **Participant selection**

This invitation extends to all newly minted criminal lawyers practicing within Dumaguete City's legal landscape. Your insights and experiences are invaluable to this research endeavor, as I aim to explore the life world unique to your professional journey.

## **Voluntary Participation**

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You also have the right and the freedom to change your decision later and to stop participating even if you agreed earlier and this will not be taken against you.

## **Procedures and Protocol**

In this investigation you will be asked to answer the questions during the focus group discussion/interview to be conducted by the field interviewer during your free and convenient time. The questions in the interview guide will be read aloud by the interviewer and you can give the answer on those items that you like to answer. Furthermore, there will be follow-up questions to be asked if necessary. If you wish not to answer some of the questions, you can tell the interviewer to skip them and to move on to the next question. The information recorded is confidential and no one else except the field interviewers and researchers will have access to the copy of the transcript and audio recording, which will be destroyed after 6 months.

To ensure that you will be able to have full understanding of the purpose of the study, the proponent will first explain the objectives of the study and the intended benefits in participating in this investigation.

## **Duration**

The duration of the research is twelve (12) months. During the data collection phase, the field interviewer will request for an appointment with you for a focus group discussion/interview at your convenient time and place. The interview will last for 40-minutes to one (1) hour. Your engagement as a participant will only take once.

## **Risks**

During the focus group discussion/interview the field interviewer will ask you about your idea/opinion pertaining your experience as a new criminal lawyer. You will not be forced nor required to answer all questions that will be asked. If you do not like to answer some of the items because you are not comfortable with them your decision will be respected and you do not have to give reasons for not responding, or for refusing to take part in the focus group discussion/interview. Furthermore, be assured that the responses that you will provide will not be shared.

## **Benefits**

There will be no immediate and direct benefits to you as a new criminal lawyer. However, your participation is anticipated to greatly contribute to my understanding of how to effectively address the challenges and aspirations faced by new criminal lawyers. Your insights are invaluable and could potentially inform strategies and interventions aimed at supporting and enhancing the experiences of legal practitioners in the field.

## **Reimbursements**

You will not be provided with any payment or monetary remuneration if you will take part in this research.

## **Confidentiality**

All the data and responses that you will provide in this investigation will not be shared to other people and will be kept confidential. Your information and other information collected from this research will be put away and no one, except the field interviewer/researcher will be able to have access to it. Any information about you will have a number/code on it instead of your name. Only the field interviewer/researcher will know your number/code. All the documents related to this investigation will be placed in the cabinet with a lock and key and will not be shared with or be given to anyone except the research proponents.

## **Sharing the Results**

After the investigation has been completed, the findings will be presented and discussed at a research conference that will take place on the main campus of the University of Cebu. Everyone who participated in the research defense will receive a copy of the research paper that contains the findings of the study, including the research instructor, the research adviser, and the people who served on the research defense panel. It will be published on an as-needed basis in order to make it accessible to the academic community and the school itself so that they can gain knowledge from it.

In cases when it is important to do so, you are welcome to also discuss the results, and the researcher will give you a copy of the report. Please mention the timeline and the rationale for providing the information, as well as the specifics, if you have a plan to do so and if you intend to do so.

## **Right to Refuse or Withdraw**

You may choose not to participate in this study. It is also of primordial importance that you must know that you may stop from participating in the focus group discussion/interview at any time.

## **Who to Contact**

You can ask them any questions you have. You may also submit questions after the study has begun. If you

desire to submit questions at a later date, please contact specified below:

Jim Peterick G. Sison- Principal Investigator - 0975-941-6224

This research project has been reviewed and scrutinized by the technical panel of the University of Cebu as part of the completion requirement in Master of Science in Criminal Justice with Specialization in Criminology. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Juanito N. Zuasula, Jr. - MD - 233-5503 UCAREC.

## **PART II: Certificate of Consent**

**I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to participate in this research.**

**Print Name of Participant** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Participant** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Day/Month/Year**

**If Illiterate:**

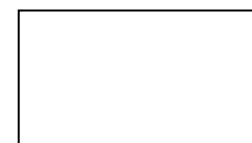
A literate witness must sign (if possible, this person should be selected by the participant and should have no connection to the research team). Participants who are illiterate should include their thumb-print as well.

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given consent freely.

**Print Name of Witness** \_\_\_\_\_

**AND Thumb Print of the Participant**

**Signature of Witness** \_\_\_\_\_



**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Day/Month/Year**

## **Statement by the researcher/person taking consent**

**I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant, and to the best of my ability made sure that the participant understands that the following will be done:**

- 1. focus group discussion/interview**
- 2. record the proceeding of the interview**
- 3. manually record other responses/ answers during the interview**

**I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.**

**A copy of this ICF has been provided to the participant.**

Print Name of Researcher/Person Taking the Consent \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Researcher /Person Taking the Consent \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Day/Month/Year

**Nahibalo Nga Porma Sa Paghugot**

[Gipahibalo nga Pag-uyon alang sa Pagtuon sa Vanguard of Justice: Life World of New Criminal Lawyers.]

[**Ngalan sa Principal Investigator:** Jim Peterrick G. Sison]

[**Ngalan sa Organisasyon:** Unibersidad sa Cebu]

[**Ngalan sa Proposal:** Vanguard of Justice: Life World of New Criminal Lawyers]

**Kining Informed Consent Form adunay duha ka bahin:**

- Information Sheet (aron ipaambit kanimo ang impormasyon bahin sa panukiduki)**
- Certificate of Consent (alang sa mga pirma kung mouyon ka nga moapil)**

**Hatagan ka ug kopya sa kompletong Form sa Informed Consent**

**BAHIN I: Information Sheet**

**Pasiuna**

Sa pagtinguha sa hustisya, ang tahas sa mga legal practitioners dili mahimong palabihon. Dili lamang sila mga ahente sa balaod kondili mga magbalantay usab sa kaangayan ug kaangayan sulod sa katilingban. Kini nga panukiduki nagtuki sa kalibutan sa kinabuhi sa bag-ong mga kriminal nga abogado sa Dumaguete City, Philippines. Nagpasabot kini sa mahinungdanong posisyon nga gihuptan sa mga indibidwal sa lokal nga legal nga ekosistema. Ang Dakbayan sa Dumaguete, nga nahimutang sa kinapusoran sa Kabisay-an, nagsilbi nga canvas diin gibuklad ang ilang propesyonal nga panaw. Subay niini, kami nag-imbitar kanimo nga mahimong usa ka interviewee/participant niini nga imbestigasyon ug mohangyo kanimo sa paggahin ug pipila ka minuto sa imong oras para sa focus group discussion/interview sa imong kombenyente nga oras ug lugar. Bisan pa, dili ka kinahanglan nga magdesisyon dayon kung moapil ka ba o dili niini nga imbestigasyon tungod kay gitugotan ka nga mangayo og pagtugot gikan sa mga kauban o mokonsulta sa bisan kinsa nga komportable ka bahin sa panukiduki. Kung adunay mga sulud sa giya sa interbyu nga dili nimo masabtan ug makit-an nga dili klaro unya ayaw kahadlok sa pagkontak ug pagpahibalo sa tigdukiduki. Makasalig ka nga ang tanan nga mga tubag / tubag nga imong ihatag pagtagdon nga adunay labing kalihim.

**Katuyoan sa panukiduki**

Ang katuyoan sa kini nga panukiduki mao ang pagsusi sa kalibutan sa kinabuhi sa mga bag-ong kriminal nga abogado sa Dumaguete City, Pilipinas, nga adunay pagpunting sa pagsabut sa ilang mga kasinatian, mga hagit, ug mga pangandoy sulod sa legal nga propesyon. Pinaagi sa qualitative inquiry, ang pagtuon nagtumong sa pagdan-ag sa buhi nga mga kasinatian niining mga legal nga practitioner, paghatag og panabut sa ilang adlaw-adlaw nga mga kamatuoran, propesyonal nga interaksyon, ug personal nga mga panaw sulod sa legal nga propesyon. Pinaagi sa pag-ila sa mga hagit nga giatubang sa mga bag-ong kriminal nga abogado sa Dumaguete City, ang panukiduki nagtinguha sa pagpasiugda sa mga dapit diin ang suporta, mga kapanguhaan, ug mga reforma mahimong gikinahanglan aron mapalambo ang ilang pagkapektibo ug kaayohan sulod sa legal nga sistema. Dugang pa, ang pagtuon naningkamot sa pagsuhid sa mga pangandoy ug mga tumong niini nga mga abogado, paghatag kahayag sa ilang mga motibasyon, career trajectory, ug mga panglantaw alang sa pagtampo sa pagpangita sa hustisya sa Dumaguete City ug sa unahan. Pinaagi sa mga nakaplagan niini, ang panukiduki

nagtumong sa pagpahibalo sa mga magbabalaod, legal practitioners, ug stakeholders mahitungod sa mga kamatuoran sa legal nga praktis sa Dumaguete City, sa ingon nakatampo sa pagpalambo sa propesyonal nga mga oportunidad sa pagpalambo, access sa hustisya, ug sa kinatibuk-ang legal nga ekosistema. Sa katapusan, kini nga panukiduki nakatampo usab sa akademikong diskurso sa mga legal nga propesyon, pag-access sa hustisya, ug sosyolohiya sa balaod, nga nagpauswag sa pagsabot sa mga eskolar sa mga pagkakomplikado ug mga nuances sa legal nga praktis sa usa ka lokal nga konteksto.

### **Matang sa Interbensyon sa Panukiduki**

Kini nga panukiduki nagsagop sa usa ka face-to-face focus group discussion/interview approach aron magtigom og dato ug nuanced nga mga panabot sa kalibutan sa kinabuhi sa bag-ong mga kriminal nga abogado sa Dumaguete City. Pinaagi sa personal nga pagtigom sa mga partisipante, gitumong sa pagtuon ang paghimo ug usa ka dinamiko ug interactive nga palibot nga makatabang sa pagbukas sa dayalogo ug mas lawom nga pagsuhid sa mga kasinatian, mga hagit, ug mga pangandoy sa mga partisipante sulod sa legal nga propesyon.

### **Pagpili sa impormante**

Kini nga imbitasyon alang sa tanan nga bag-ong nahimo nga kriminal nga mga abogado nga nagpraktis sulod sa legal nga talan-awon sa Dumaguete City. Ang imong mga panabut ug mga kasinatian hinungdanon sa kini nga paningkamot sa pagpanukiduki, tungod kay akong gitinguha nga masusi ang kalibutan sa kinabuhi nga talagsaon sa imong propesyonal nga panaw.

### **Boluntaryong Pag-apil**

Ang imong pag-apil sa kini nga panukiduki hingpit nga boluntaryo. Ikaw usab adunay katungod ug kagawasan sa pag-usab sa imong desisyon sa ulahi ug sa paghunong sa pag-apil bisan pa kon ikaw miuyon sa sayo pa ug kini dili pagakuhaon batok kanimo.

### **Mga Pamaagi ug Protokol**

Niini nga imbestigasyon hangyoon ka sa pagtubag sa mga pangutana atol sa focus group discussion/interview nga ipahigayon sa field interviewer atol sa imong libre ug sayon nga panahon. Ang mga pangutana sa giya sa interbyu basahon sa kusog sa tig-interbyu ug mahimo nimong ihatag ang tubag sa mga butang nga gusto nimo tubagon. Dugang pa, adunay mga follow-up nga mga pangutana nga ipangutana kung gikinahanglan. Kung gusto nimo nga dili motubag sa pipila ka mga pangutana, mahimo nimong sultihan ang tig-interbyu nga laktawan kini ug magpadayon sa sunod nga pangutana. Ang impormasyon nga narekord kay kompidensyal ug walay lain gawas sa field interviewers ug researchers ang adunay access sa kopya sa transcript ug audio recording, nga gub-on human sa 6 ka bulan.

Aron maseguro nga makabaton kag bug-os nga pagsabot sa katuyoan sa pagtuon, ang tipasiugda mopatin-aw una sa mga tumong sa pagtuon ug ang gituyo nga mga benepisyos sa pag-apil niini nga imbestigasyon.

### **Gidugayon**

Ang gidugayon sa panukiduki dose (12) ka bulan. Atol sa yugto sa pagkolekta sa datos, ang tig-interbyu sa uma mohangyo og appointment kanimo para sa usa ka focus group discussion/interview sa imong kombenyente nga oras ug lugar. Ang interbyu molungtad og 40-minutos ngadto sa usa (1) ka oras. Ang imong engagement isip participant kay kausa ra.

### **Mga risgo**

Atol sa focus group discussion/interview ang field interviewer mangutana kanimo mahitungod sa imong ideya/opinyon kalabut sa imong kasinatian isip bag-ong kriminal nga abogado. Dili ka mapugos o kinahanglan nga tubagon ang tanan nga mga pangutana nga ipangutana. Kung dili ka ganahan motubag sa pipila ka mga butang tungod kay dili ka komportable niini ang imong desisyon respetuhon ug dili nimo kinahanglan nga mohatag ug mga rason sa dili pagtubag, o sa pagdumili sa pag-apil sa focus group discussion/interview. Dugang

pa, pagsiguro nga ang mga tubag nga imong ihatag dili ipaambit.

### **Mga kaayohan**

Walay diha-diha ug direkta nga mga benepisyo kanimo isip usa ka bag-ong kriminal nga abogado. Bisan pa, ang imong pag-apil gipaabut nga makatampo og dako sa akong pagsabut kung giunsa epektibo nga matubag ang mga hagit ug pangandoy nga giatubang sa bag-ong mga abogado sa kriminal. Ang imong mga panabut bililhon ug mahimo'g makapahibalo sa mga estratehiya ug mga interbensyon nga gitumong sa pagsuporta ug pagpauswag sa mga kasinatian sa mga ligal nga practitioner sa natad.

### **Mga reimbursement**

Dili ka hatagan og bisan unsang bayad o suhol sa kwarta kung moapil ka niini nga panukiduki.

### **Pagkakompidensyal**

Ang tanan nga datos ug mga tubag nga imong ihatag sa kini nga imbestigasyon dili ipaambit sa ubang mga tawo ug huptan nga kompidensyal. Ang imong impormasyon ug uban pang impormasyon nga nakolekta gikan niini nga panukiduki itago ug walay usa, gawas sa field interviewer/researcher ang makabaton niini. Ang bisan unsang impormasyon babin kanimo adunay numero/code niini imbes sa imong ngalan. Ang field interviewer/researcher lang ang makahibalo sa imong numero/code. Ang tanan nga mga dokumento nga may kalabutan sa kini nga imbestigasyon ibutang sa kabinete nga adunay kandado ug yawe ug dili ipaambit o ihatag ni bisan kinsa gawas sa mga tigpasiugda sa panukiduki.

### **Pagpaambit sa mga Resulta**

Human makompleto ang imbestigasyon, ang mga resulta ipresentar ug hisgotan sa usa ka research conference nga mahitabo sa main campus sa Unibersidad sa Cebu. Ang tanan nga miapil sa research defense makadawat og kopya sa research paper nga naglangkob sa mga findings sa pagtuon, lakip ang research instructor, research adviser, ug ang mga tawo nga nagserbisyo sa research defense panel. Ipatik kini sa gikinahanglan nga basehan aron mahimo kining accessible sa academic community ug sa eskwelahan mismo aron sila makakuha og kahibalo gikan niini.

Sa mga kaso nga importante ang pagbuhat sa ingon, welcome ka nga hisgutan usab ang mga resulta, ug ang tigdukiduki mohatag kanimo og kopya sa report. Palihog hisgoti ang timeline ug ang rason sa paghatag sa impormasyon, ingon man ang mga detalye, kon ikaw adunay plano sa pagbuhat sa ingon ug kon ikaw nagtinguha sa pagbuhat sa ingon.

### **Katungod sa Pagdumili o Pag-atras**

Mahimo nimong pilion nga dili moapil niini nga pagtuon. Importante usab kini nga kinahanglan nimong masayran nga mahimo kang mohunong sa pag-apil sa focus group discussion/interview bisan unsang orasa.

### **Kinsa ang Kontakon**

Mahimo nimong pangutan-on sila bisan unsang mga pangutana nga naa nimo. Mahimo ka usab nga mosumite og mga pangutana pagkahuman sa pagtuon. Kung gusto nimong isumite ang mga pangutana sa ulahi nga petsa, palihug kontaka ang gipih sa ubos:

Jim Peterrick G. Sison- Principal Investigator - 0975-941-6224

Kini nga proyekto sa panukiduki gisusi ug gisusi sa technical panel sa Unibersidad sa Cebu isip kabahin sa completion requirement sa Master of Science in Criminal Justice with Specialization in Criminology. Kung naa kay pangutana, palihog kontaka si Dr. Juanito N. Zuasula, Jr. - MD - 233-5503 UCAREC.

### **BAHIN II: Sertipiko sa Pag-uyon**

Nabasa ko na ang nasambit nga impormasyon, ukon ginbasa na ini sa akon. Nakahigayon ko sa pagpangutana bahan niini ug ang bisan unsang mga pangutana nga akong gipangutana natubag sa akong katagbawan. Ako boluntaryong miuyon sa pag-apil niini nga panukiduki.

**I-print ang Ngalan sa Partisipante** \_\_\_\_\_

**Pirma sa Partisipante** \_\_\_\_\_

**Petsa** \_\_\_\_\_

**Adlaw/Bulan/Tuig**

**Kung dili makabasa:**

Kinahanglang mopirma ang usa ka saksi nga makabasa (kung mahimo, kini nga tawo kinahanglan nga pilion sa partisipante ug kinahanglan nga walay koneksyon sa grupo sa panukiduki). Ang mga partisipante nga dili makamaong mobasa ug mobasa kinahanglan nga maglakip usab sa ilang thumb-print.

Akong nasaksihan ang tukma nga pagbasa sa forma sa pagtugot sa potensyal nga partisipante, ug ang indibidwal adunay higayon sa pagpangutana. Akong gikumpirma nga ang indibidwal libre nga naghatag pagtugot.

**I-print ang Ngalan sa Saksi** \_\_\_\_\_ **UG Thumb Print sa Partisipante**

**Pirma sa Saksi** \_\_\_\_\_

**Petsa** \_\_\_\_\_

**Adlaw/Buwan/Tuig**

**Pahayag sa tigdukiduki/tawo nga mikuha og pagtugot**

Sakto nakong gibasa ang information sheet ngadto sa potensyal nga partisipante, ug sa labing maayo sa akong abilidad nakasiguro nga ang partisipante nakasabut nga ang mosunod pagabuhaton:

1. focus group discussion/interview
2. irekord ang pagpadayon sa interbyu
3. manwal nga irekord ang ubang mga tubag/ tubag atol sa interbyu

Akong gikumpirma nga ang partisipante gihatagan og kahigayon sa pagpangutana mahitungod sa pagtuon, ug ang tanang mga pangutana nga gipangutana sa partisipante natubag sa husto ug kutob sa akong mahimo. Akong gikumpirma nga ang indibidwal wala pugsa sa paghatag ug pagtugot, ug ang pagtugot gihatag nga gawasnon ug boluntaryo.

Usa ka kopya niini nga ICF gihatag ngadto sa misalmot.

**I-print ang Ngalan sa Tigdukiduki/Tawo nga Nagkuha sa Pag-uyon** \_\_\_\_\_

**Pirma sa Tigdukiduki/Tawo nga Nagkuha sa Pag-uyon** \_\_\_\_\_

**Petsa** \_\_\_\_\_

**Adlaw/Buwan/Tuig**

**Appendix C**

## INTERVIEW GUIDE

### FOR

#### **VANGUARD OF JUSTICE: LIFE WORLD OF NEW CRIMINAL LAWYERS**

Note: Rest assured that all information provided by the participants in response to all questions will be kept strictly confidential.

#### **1. What were the experiences of the participants during the first two years of their legal practice?**

##### **A. Positive Experiences**

1.1 Can you recollect any particularly fulfilling moments you encountered within your initial two years of criminal law practice, whether in the capacity of a prosecutor or as defense counsel?

1.2 When looking back on your early courtroom engagements within criminal law practice, did any instances, representing either the prosecution or the defense, stand out as notably positive or satisfying?

1.3 During your initial two years practicing criminal law, can you discuss any significant accomplishments or moments of progress you encountered across different aspects of criminal law practice?

##### **B. Negative Experiences**

1.1 During your initial two years practicing law within the realm of criminal defense or prosecution, what were the typical challenges you encountered?

1.2 In your first two years of practicing criminal law, what were the common hurdles you faced while serving as either a prosecutor or defense counsel?

1.3 Throughout your first two years as a criminal lawyer, what obstacles did you encounter while navigating the intricacies of criminal law practice, whether in the role of prosecuting or defending?

#### **How did the participants address the challenges they encountered during the first two years of their legal practice?**

2.1 In your initial two years within criminal law practice, how did you navigate through and surmount challenges you faced, whether operating as a prosecutor or defense counsel?

2.2 What effective strategies did you utilize to overcome obstacles encountered during your initial two years as a practicing criminal lawyer?

2.3 Could you elaborate on specific instances where you effectively tackled challenges within the realm of criminal law practice? How did these experiences contribute to your professional development as a prosecutor or defense attorney?

#### **3. What were the aspirations of the participants to improve their legal services?**

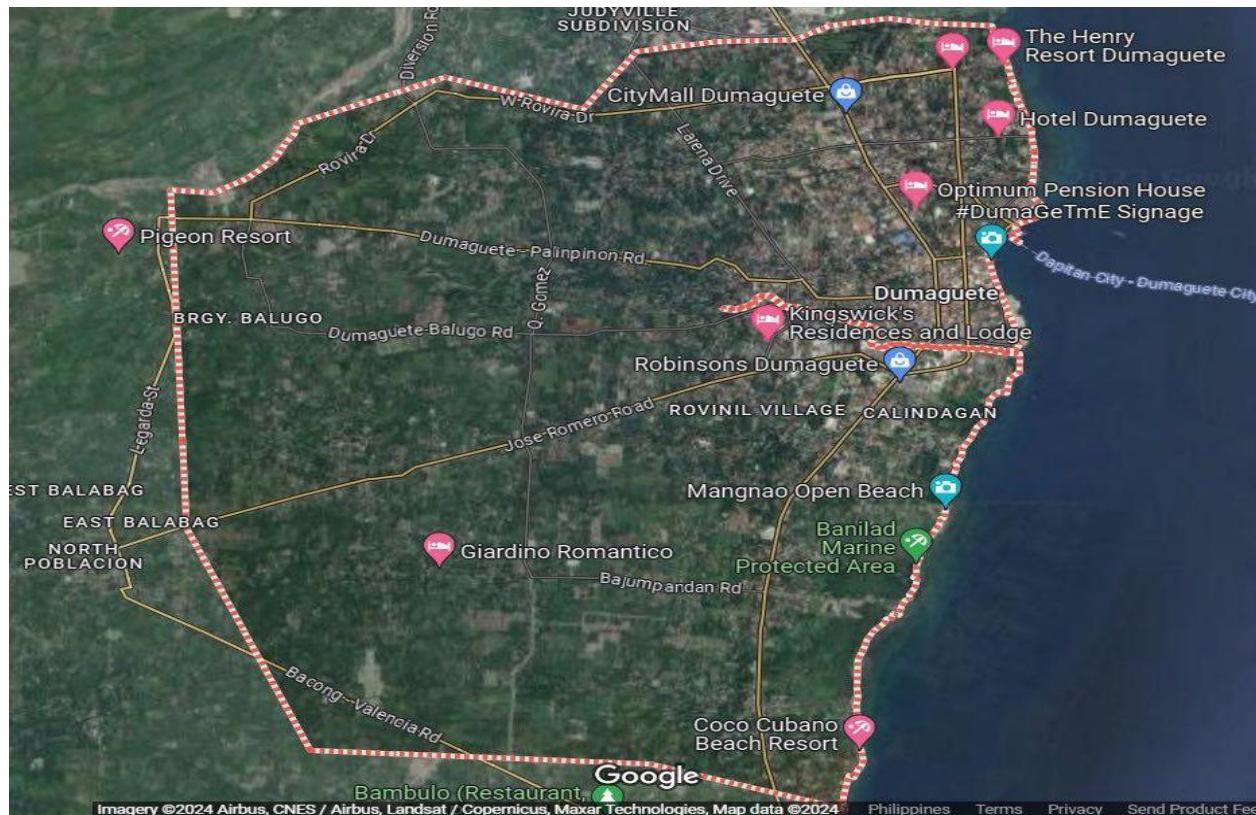
3.1 In the initial stages of your criminal law practice, how did you translate your aspirations to improve your legal services into your day-to-day practice within the field of criminal law?

3.2 What role did ongoing learning and development play in your efforts to fulfill your aspirations of enhancing the quality of your services in criminal law practice?

3.3 How did your aspirations to elevate the effectiveness of your legal services in criminal law practice inspire and drive you during your first two years?

## Appendix D

### LOCATION MAP



Dumaguete City, Negros Island Region, 6200

[https://www.google.com/maps/place/Dumaguete+City,+Negros+Oriental/@9.3148721,123.2634852,7784m/d  
ata=!3m1!1e3!4m6!3m5!1s0x33ab6f392de360b7:0x2d6945df4760769!8m2!3d9.2984086!4d123.2924859!16s%2Fg%2F11f0wk11gy?hl=en&entry=ttu](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Dumaguete+City,+Negros+Oriental/@9.3148721,123.2634852,7784m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m6!3m5!1s0x33ab6f392de360b7:0x2d6945df4760769!8m2!3d9.2984086!4d123.2924859!16s%2Fg%2F11f0wk11gy?hl=en&entry=ttu)

## Appendix E

### TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW 1 (IDI 1)

**RESEARCHER:** Good evening, attorney. I am Jim Peterick G. Sison, a masteral student of the University of Cebu main campus. I'm taking up a Master of Science in Criminal Justice. So, I am here today to know your experiences as a new criminal lawyer. So, I will ask you questions about your challenges, your aspirations, and also your positive and negative experiences during the first two years of your legal practice.

**IDI 1:** Okay, okay.

**RESEARCHER:** Okay, so attorney, for the first question, can you recollect any particularly fulfilling moments you encountered within your initial two years of criminal law practice, whether as a private prosecutor or as a defense counsel?

**IDI 1:** As a private prosecutor, one of my fulfilling moments was when I was able to gather all of the pieces of evidence to successfully file a case in the preliminary level or in the fiscal level. And as a defense counsel, one of my fulfilling moments as well is to be able to file a counter-affidavit within the time frame provided by the fiscal.

**RESEARCHER:** Okay. Next question, attorney. When looking back on your early courtroom engagements within criminal law practice, did any instances representing either the prosecution or the defense, stand out as

---

notably positive or satisfying?

**IDI 1:** One of the instances was when I participated as one of the defense counsels in a statutory acts of lasciviousness case. I was able to successfully object some of the material documents that the prosecution would introduce. And if it was able to be introduced by the prosecution, it is very crucial to the defeat of my case. And I was able to successfully object it.

**RESEARCHER:** Okay. So, can you discuss any significant accomplishment or accomplishments you encountered across different aspects of criminal law practice?

**IDI 1:** Significant accomplishments? One of the significant accomplishments that I was able to experience was when I was able to dismiss a slight physical injuries case in the fiscal level. I was the defense attorney of my client during this time.

**RESEARCHER:** Okay. Thank you, attorney. For your negative experiences, question number one. During your initial two years of practicing law or criminal law, either as a private prosecutor or as a defense counsel, what were the typical challenges you encountered?

**IDI 1:** First challenge is to gather the statements of the witnesses since you have to adjust their time. Second is to gather your documentary pieces of evidence because some of them will provide documents which are only photocopies and which are not original. And lastly is the resolution of the cases especially if you're on the defense side because it takes a lot of time before it is resolved by the fiscal.

**RESEARCHER:** Okay. What were the common hurdles you faced while serving as either a private prosecutor or as a defense counsel?

**IDI 1:** One of the common hurdles I faced is that when a witness is not cooperative on your side since it will make the gathering of statements more difficult.

**RESEARCHER:** And what obstacles did you encounter while navigating the intricacies of criminal law practice whether in the role of prosecuting or defending?

**IDI 1:** One of the intricacies is that each court has its own different set of rules. It is true that we have rules of court but in actuality we have rules of the court so we have to follow the rules of the court so that your case will prosper.

**RESEARCHER:** Okay. So, in your initial two years of practicing criminal law, how did you navigate through and surmount challenges you faced whether operating as a private prosecutor or as defense counsel?

**IDI 1:** One of the ways that I have navigated through and surmounted the challenges is to keep on studying the rules so that while you're in court you have ideas on what specific rules you will use either to object or to have your case prosper. Second is to study the latest jurisprudence since it keeps on evolving.

**RESEARCHER:** Okay. And what effective strategies did you utilize to overcome obstacles you encountered during your initial two years of practicing criminal law?

**IDI 1:** One of my effective strategies is to keep a timetable and to always have a schedule so that I won't miss any hearings or trial dates and I will be able to properly prepare for the defense of my client.

**RESEARCHER:** Could you elaborate on specific instances where you effectively tackled challenges within the realm of criminal law practice? How did these experiences contribute to your professional development as a prosecutor or defense attorney?

**IDI 1:** One of the specific instances that I tackled, one of the challenges that I tackled was that during the pre-trial stage of a criminal case which is the statutory acts of lasciviousness that I encountered before. And, within this stage I was able to learn when to provide my objections to the marking of the evidence and to what pieces

of information that I will stipulate to the prosecutor. It helped me in my professional development because I was able to learn how to be more keen on the statements that are included in the documents so that I will be able to stipulate information that would be vital to the prosecution's case and would defeat my case.

**RESEARCHER:** Okay. And for your aspirations attorney, question number one, in the initial stages of your criminal law practice, how did you translate your aspirations to improve your legal services into your day-to-day practice within the field of criminal law?

## Appendix F

### LINE NUMBERS

Interviewed by: Jim Peterick G. Sison

Transcribed by: Jim Peterick G. Sison

Reviewed by: Paulino V. Pioquinto

Line Number	VERBATIM RESPONSES	Participant
1.	As a private prosecutor, one of my fulfilling moments was when I was	IDI1
2.	able to gather all of the pieces of evidence to successfully file a case in	IDI1
3.	the preliminary level or in the fiscal level. And as a defense counsel,	IDI1
4.	one of my fulfilling moments as well is to be able to file a counter-	IDI1
5.	affidavit within the time frame provided by the fiscal.	IDI1
6.	One of the instances was when I participated as one of the defenses	IDI1
7.	counsels in a statutory acts of lasciviousness case. I was able to	IDI1
8.	successfully object some of the material documents that the	IDI1
9.	prosecution would introduce and if it was able to be introduced by the	IDI1
10.	prosecution, it is very crucial to the defeat of my case and I was able	IDI1
11.	to successfully object it.	IDI1
12.	One of the significant accomplishments that I was able to experience	IDI1
13.	was when I was able to dismiss a slight physical injury case in the fiscal	IDI1
14.	level. I was the defense attorney of my client during this time.	IDI1
15.	The first challenge is to gather the statements of the witnesses since	IDI1
16.	you have to adjust their time. Second is to gather your documentary	IDI1
17.	pieces of evidence because some of them will provide documents	IDI1
18.	which are only photocopies and which are not original, and lastly is	IDI1
19.	the resolution of the cases especially if you're on the defense side	IDI1

20.	because it takes a lot of time before it is resolved by the fiscal.	IDI1
21.	One of the common hurdles I faced is that when a witness is not	IDI1
22.	cooperative on your side since it will make the gathering of statements	IDI1
23.	more difficult.	IDI1
24.	One of the intricacies is that each court has its own different set of	IDI1
25.	rules. It is true that we have rules of court but in actuality we have rules	IDI1
26.	of the court so we have to follow the rules of the court so that your case	IDI1
27.	will prosper.	IDI1
28.	One of the ways that I have navigated through and surmounted the	IDI1
29.	challenges is to keep on studying the rules so that while you're in court	IDI1
30.	you have ideas on what specific rules you will use either to object or	IDI1
31.	to have your case prosper. Second is to study the latest jurisprudence	IDI1
32.	since it keeps on evolving.	IDI1
33.	One of my effective strategies is to keep a timetable and to always have	IDI1
34.	a schedule so that I won't miss any hearings or trial dates and I will be	IDI1
35.	able to properly prepare for the defense of my client.	IDI1
36.	One of the specific instances that I tackled, one of the challenges that	IDI1
37.	I tackled was that during the pre-trial stage of a criminal case which is	IDI1
38.	the statutory acts of lasciviousness that I encountered before and	IDI1
39.	within this stage I was able to learn when to provide my	IDI1
40.	objections to the marking of the evidence and to what pieces of	IDI1
41.	information that I will stipulate to the prosecutor. It helped me in my	IDI1
42.	professional development because I was able to learn how to be keener	IDI1
43.	on the statements that are included in the documents so that I will be	IDI1
44.	able to stipulate information that would be vital to the prosecution's	IDI1
45.	case and would defeat my case.	IDI1
46.	That would be more on the interviewing the clients. Yes, because over	IDI1
47.	time I was able to learn how to establish rapport with my witnesses and	IDI1

48.	that over time as well I was able to fish out information which I believe	IDI1
49.	would be more beneficial to my case and to distinguish what	IDI1
50.	information should I put in my affidavit. Affidavit of my witnesses or	IDI1
51.	to the defense of my client and I think that would be all.	IDI1
52.	It contributed many on what type of defense I would give to my client	IDI1
53.	since ongoing learning applies to learning the latest jurisprudence and	IDI1
54.	since criminal law keeps or some jurisprudence criminal law are	IDI1
55.	changing the same as the RA 9262, VAWC where in the part of	IDI1
56.	economic abuse before, RA 9262 was a crime that is mala prohibit a	IDI1
57.	but then Supreme Court case held that it is mala in se although it is a	IDI1
58.	special law. So, in which applying for that instance it helped me to	IDI1
59.	actually establish the type of jurisprudence that I will put in my	IDI1
60.	pleading so that I will be able to properly defend my clients.	IDI1
61.	So, one of the ways that or rather what inspired me to drive to	IDI1
62.	improve my effectiveness in my legal services is that it is satisfying to	IDI1
63.	see that my clients are happy with the service that I give them. And	IDI1
64.	that they are satisfied as well that I was able to defend their cases	IDI1
65.	properly and because of that I keep on improving my skills and	IDI1
66.	competence. So, for my future clients I will be able to more properly	IDI1
67.	be able to defend their cases. That will be all.	IDI1
68.	you have sufficient knowledge.	FGD 6

## Appendix G

### CODED SIGNIFICANT STATEMENTS

SS NUMBER	SIGNIFICANT STATEMENTS	PARTICIPANT NUMBER	LINE NUMBER
1	As a private prosecutor, one of my fulfilling moments was when I was able to gather all of the	IDI 1	1-5

	pieces of evidence to successfully file a case in the preliminary level or in the fiscal level. And as a defense counsel, one of my fulfilling moments as well is to be able to file a counter-affidavit within the time frame provided by the fiscal.		
<b>2</b>	I was able to successfully object some of the material documents that the prosecution would introduce and if it was able to be introduced by the prosecution, it is very crucial to the defeat of my case.	<b>IDI 1</b>	<b>7-10</b>
<b>3</b>	One of the significant accomplishments that I was able to experience was when I was able to dismiss a slight physical injuries case in the fiscal level.	<b>IDI 1</b>	<b>12-14</b>
<b>4</b>	First challenge is to gather the statements of the witnesses since you have to adjust their time. Second is to gather your documentary pieces of evidence because some of them will provide documents which are only photocopies and which are not original, and lastly is the resolution of the cases especially if you're on the defense side because it takes a lot of time before it is resolved by the fiscal.	<b>IDI 1</b>	<b>15-20</b>
<b>5</b>	One of the common hurdles I faced is that when a witness is not cooperative on your side since it will make the gathering of statements more difficult.	<b>IDI 1</b>	<b>21-23</b>
<b>6</b>	One of the intricacies is that each court has its own different set of rules. It is true that we have rules of court but in actuality we have rules of the court so we have to follow the rules of the court so that your case will prosper.	<b>IDI 1</b>	<b>24-27</b>
<b>7</b>	One of the ways that I have navigated through and surmounted the challenges is to keep on studying the rules so that while you're in court you have ideas on what specific rules you will use either to object or to have your case prosper. Second is to study the latest jurisprudence since it keeps on evolving.	<b>IDI 1</b>	<b>28-32</b>
<b>8</b>	One of my effective strategies is to keep a timetable and to always have a schedule so that I won't miss any hearings or trial dates and I will be able to properly prepare for the defense of my client.	<b>IDI 1</b>	<b>33-35</b>
<b>9</b>	One of the specific instances that I tackled, one of the challenges that I tackled was that during the pre-trial stage of a criminal case which is the statutory acts of lasciviousness that I encountered before and within this stage I was able to learn	<b>IDI 1</b>	<b>36-45</b>

	when to provide my objections to the marking of the evidence and to what pieces of information that I will stipulate to the prosecutor. It helped me in my professional development because I was able to learn how to be more keen on the statements that are included in the documents so that I will be able to stipulate information that would be vital to the prosecution's case and would defeat my case.		
<b>10</b>	Over time I was able to learn how to establish rapport with my witnesses and that over time as well I was able to fish out information which I believe would be more beneficial to my case and to distinguish what information should I put in my affidavit. Affidavit of my witnesses or to the defense of my client and to, I think that would be all.	<b>IDI 1</b>	<b>46-51</b>
<b>11</b>	It contributed many on what type of defense I would give to my client since ongoing learning applies to learning the latest jurisprudence and since criminal law keeps on some jurisprudence criminal law are changing the same as the RA 9262, VAWC where in the part of economic abuse before, RA 9262 was a crime that is mala prohibit a but then Supreme Court case held that it is mala in se although it is a special law. So, in which applying for that instance it helped me to actually establish the type of jurisprudence that I will put in my pleading so that I will be able to properly defend my clients.	<b>IDI 1</b>	<b>52-60</b>
<b>12</b>	So, one of the ways that or rather what inspired me to drive to improve my effectiveness in my legal services is that it is satisfying to see that my clients are happy with the service that I give them. And that they are satisfied as well that I was able to defend their cases properly and because of that I keep on improving my skills and competence. So, for my future clients I will be able to more properly be able to defend their cases.	<b>IDI 1</b>	<b>61-67</b>

## Appendix H

### Formulated Core Meanings

<b>SIGNIFICANT STATEMENTS</b>	<b>FORMULATED MEANINGS</b>
As a private prosecutor, one of my fulfilling moments was when I was able to gather all of the pieces of evidence to successfully file a case in the preliminary level or in the fiscal level. And as a defense counsel, one of my fulfilling moments as	The lawyer is comfortable with both prosecution and defense roles and finds satisfaction in various aspects of litigation.

<p>well is to be able to file a counter-affidavit within the time frame provided by the fiscal.</p> <p>IDI1:SS1</p>	<p>FM1</p>
<p>I was able to successfully object some of the material documents that the prosecution would introduce and if it was able to be introduced by the prosecution, it is very crucial to the defeat of my case.</p> <p>IDI1:SS2</p>	<p>The Lawyer emphasizes the significance of successfully excluding evidence.</p> <p>FM2</p>
<p>One of the significant accomplishments that I was able to experience was when I was able to dismiss a slight physical injuries case in the fiscal level.</p> <p>IDI1: SS3</p>	<p>The Lawyer achieved a positive outcome for his client in the early stages of a legal case.</p> <p>FM3</p>
<p>First challenge is to gather the statements of the witnesses since you have to adjust their time. Second is to gather your documentary pieces of evidence because some of them will provide documents which are only photocopies and which are not original, and lastly is the resolution of the cases especially if you're on the defense side because it takes a lot of time before it is resolved by the fiscal.</p> <p>IDI1: SS4</p>	<p>The lawyer points out the difficulties of obtaining evidence and the frustrations of lengthy prosecution waits, particularly for the defense.</p> <p>FM4</p>
<p>One of the common hurdles I faced is that when a witness is not cooperative on your side since it will make the gathering of statements more difficult.</p> <p>IDI1: SS5</p>	<p>Uncooperative witnesses hinder the lawyer's ability to gather evidence and effectively represent their client.</p> <p>FM5</p>
<p>One of the intricacies is that each court has its own different set of rules. It is true that we have rules of court but in actuality we have rules of the court so we have to follow the rules of the court so that your case will prosper.</p> <p>IDI1: SS6</p>	<p>The lawyer warns that failure to understand and follow the specific court rules can have serious consequences, including sanctions or adverse rulings</p> <p>FM6</p>
<p>One of the ways that I have navigated through and surmounted the challenges is to keep on studying the rules so that while you're in court you have ideas on what specific rules you will use either to object or to have your case prosper. Second is to study the latest jurisprudence since it keeps on evolving.</p> <p>IDI1: SS7</p>	<p>Ongoing learning enables them to stay up-to-date on legal developments and provide the best possible representation for their clients.</p> <p>FM7</p>
<p>One of my effective strategies is to keep a</p>	<p>It is effective to stay organized with a timetable or</p>

<p>timetable and to always have a schedule so that I won't miss any hearings or trial dates and I will be able to properly prepare for the defense of my client.</p> <p>IDI1: SS8</p>	<p>schedule as a way to avoid missing court appearances and ensure they have ample time to prepare a well-developed defense for their client.</p> <p>FM 8</p>
<p>One of the specific instances that I tackled, one of the challenges that I tackled was that during the pre-trial stage of a criminal case which is the statutory acts of lasciviousness that I encountered before and within this stage I was able to learn when to provide my objections to the marking of the evidence and to what pieces of information that I will stipulate to the prosecutor. It helped me in my professional development because I was able to learn how to be more keen on the statements that are included in the documents so that I will be able to stipulate information that would be vital to the prosecution's case and would defeat my case.</p>	<p>Strategically objecting to evidence and choosing which information to concede to the prosecution are important.</p> <p>FM 9</p>
<p>IDI1: SS9</p>	
<p>Over time I was able to learn how to establish rapport with my witnesses and that over time as well I was able to fish out information which I believe would be more beneficial to my case and to distinguish what information should I put in my affidavit. Affidavit of my witnesses or to the defense of my client and to, I think that would be all.</p> <p>IDI1: SS10</p>	<p>It's really important to build trust with witnesses, get useful information from them, and choose what information to put in different legal documents to make the biggest impact on the case.</p> <p>FM10</p>

## Appendix I

### Development Of Cluster Themes

FORMULATED MEANINGS	CLUSTER OF THEMES
<p>The lawyer has experienced significant personal and professional growth, transitioning from self-doubt to confidence and validation.</p> <p>FM71</p>	<p>Developing self-assurance through experiences and challenges in the early stages of practice.</p>
<p>The Lawyer has come a long way from their initial lack of confidence. Through experience and potentially inspired by the idea of perseverance, they have developed the self-assurance needed to perform effectively in court.</p> <p>FM80</p>	
<p>The Lawyer emphasizes the importance of overcoming fear and taking initiative in the face of new challenges, while acknowledging the value</p>	

of preparation, experience, and faith.	
FM107	
The Lawyer highlights the importance of overcoming initial challenges and learning from mistakes to develop confidence and competence in the courtroom.	
FM116	
The Lawyer achieved a positive outcome for his client in the early stages of a legal case.	
FM3	
A successful performance in court, as seen through sustained objections and arguments, leads to satisfaction.	Finding fulfillment in courtroom victories and favorable outcomes for clients.
FM28	
The Lawyer feels satisfied by their successful legal representation of a client, particularly in a potentially challenging situation with a veteran and a brilliant lawyer present. It suggests a sense of accomplishment in achieving a positive outcome for the client while adhering to legal principles.	
FM63	
The Lawyer captures the satisfaction from achieving a positive outcome for their clients, even when faced with seemingly insurmountable challenges. It highlights the value of thorough investigation and the impact it can have on a case.	
FM97	
It is important that lawyers fulfilling their professional and ethical duty to provide legal assistance to those who need it, even in pro bono (unpaid) situations.	
FM36	
The Lawyer emphasizes the importance of ethical practice in law, even when representing clients accused of crimes and also highlights the sense of accomplishment in achieving a successful outcome while staying true to their principles.	Deriving a sense of purpose from maintaining high ethical standards and ensuring justice is served.
FM114	
The Lawyer emphasizes the ethical and emotional challenges they face when their professional duty to represent a client clashes with their personal beliefs about the client's guilt.	
FM117	
Strategically objecting to evidence and choosing which information to	

<p>concede to the prosecution are important.</p> <p>FM 9</p>	
<p>Courtroom skills are important like raising objections for lawyers and also finds it personally rewarding to be able to use this skill effectively in court.</p> <p>FM74</p>	<p>Enhancing litigation techniques and crafting persuasive arguments in court.</p>
<p>The Lawyer emphasizes the importance of cross-examination as a tool to uncover information that can be used to strengthen the client's defense in court.</p> <p>FM99</p>	
<p>Public speaking in court is a difficult skill to master, even for new lawyers who have prepared diligently.</p> <p>FM102</p>	
<p>It is important to consider alternatives to a guilty plea and the satisfaction that comes from achieving a win-win situation through negotiation.</p> <p>FM13</p>	
<p>The legal field is constantly evolving, and lawyers must be committed to lifelong learning to stay effective and provide the best possible service to their clients.</p> <p>FM95</p>	

## Appendix J

### DEVELOPMENT OF EMERGENT THEMES

CLUSTER THEMES	EMERGENT THEMES	
<p><b>I. Experiences of New Criminal Lawyers</b></p> <p><b>A. Positive Experiences</b></p>		
<p>Developing self-assurance through experiences and challenges in the early stages of practice.</p>	<p><b>Forged in the Fires of Justice</b></p>	
<p>Finding fulfillment in courtroom victories and favorable outcomes for clients.</p>		
<p>Deriving a sense of purpose from maintaining high ethical standards and ensuring justice is served.</p>		

<p>Enhancing litigation techniques and crafting persuasive arguments in court.t.</p> <p>Developing skills to resolve disputes through negotiation and out-of-court settlements</p> <p>Embracing teamwork and education as integral to professional development.</p> <p>Emphasizing the importance of meticulous planning and fact-checking to build a solid case.</p> <p>Mastering the art of working with witnesses and presenting evidence convincingly.</p> <p>Growing through reflection on errors made during legal practice.</p>	<p><b>Mastering the Art of Advocacy</b></p> <p><b>Weaving the Tapestry of Precision</b></p>
<p><b>B. Negative Experiences</b></p>	
<p>Addressing knowledge and competency gaps in the early years of practice.</p> <p>Balancing heavy caseloads with limited time while maintaining quality work.</p>	<p><b>Navigating the Labyrinth of Law</b></p>
<p>Successfully interpreting and applying intricate legal rules and protocols</p>	
<p>Developing the skills to handle client relationships and communicate effectively</p>	
<p>Addressing the mental and emotional demands of legal practice</p>	<p><b>The Symphony of Counsel and Resilience</b></p>
<p>Managing stress from societal expectations and media attention on cases</p>	
<p>Encountering Bureaucratic Delays and Procedural Issues</p>	<p><b>Wading Through the Tempest of Expectations</b></p>
<p><b>II. Addressing the Challenges Encountered</b></p>	
<p>Using lifelong education and guidance from mentors to improve legal skills</p>	<p><b>Carving Paths of Wisdom and Precision</b></p>
<p>Organizing and prioritizing tasks to ensure efficient handling of legal matters.</p>	
<p>Problem-Solving through Critical Thinking and Flexibility</p>	
<p>Relying on collaborative efforts and peer support to achieve legal objectives.</p>	<p><b>The Pillars of Partnership and Trust</b></p>
<p>Building Strong Client Relationships through clear communication</p>	
<p>Using both successes and failures in court to refine legal strategies.</p>	<p><b>The Dance of Triumph and Trial</b></p>
<p>Building confidence incrementally through minor but meaningful successes.</p>	
<p><b>III. Life Aspirations</b></p>	

Applying Aspirations through Client-Centered Advocacy	<b>The Beacon of Purpose and Principle</b>
Commitment to procedural excellence and integrity	
Mentorship and Peer Learning as Catalysts for Growth	<b>The Garden of Growth and Knowledge</b>
Incorporating Ongoing Legal Education and Case Law Mastery	
Striving for Excellence through Self-Reflection and Improvement	<b>The Quest for Excellence</b>
Developing case strategies that reflect a commitment to client advocacy and long-term goals for success.	

## **APPENDIX K**

### **DIAGRAM OF COMMON THEMES**

#### **CURRICULUM VITAE**

##### **Jim Peterick G. Sison**

jimsison22@gmail.com  
[https://orcid.org/0009-0008-6609 3875](https://orcid.org/0009-0008-6609-3875)  
University of Cebu  
Cebu City

#### **EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:**

Graduate School : Master of Science in Criminal Justice

University of Cebu – Main Campus 2022 to present (on-going)

Graduate School : Juris Doctor

Negros Oriental State University

Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental

2017-2021

College : Bachelor of Science in Criminology

Colegio de Santa Catalina de Alejandria

2013-2017

High School : Negros Oriental High School Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental

2009-2013

Elementary : North City Elementary School

Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental

2003- 2009

**Achievements:**

**BAR Examination Passer (Self-Review)**

February 4 and 6, 2022

**Criminology Licensure Examination Passer (Self-Review)**

June 2017

**Certified Human Resource Associate**

Batch 50 Passer

August 5, 2024

**MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:**

- INTEGRATED BAR OF THE PHILIPPINES- MEMBER
- PROFESSIONAL CRIMINOLOGISTS ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES- MEMBER
- THE FRATERNAL ORDER OF EAGLES- PHILIPPINE EAGLES- ALTERNATE REGIONAL ASSEMBLYMAN
- PHILIPPINE CRIMINALISTICS SOCIETY- MEMBER
- PHILIPPINE SOCIETY FOR INDUSTRIAL SECURITY- MEMBER

**WORK EXPERIENCES:**

Criminology Instructor : Colegio de Santa Catalina de Alejandria

Dumaguete City

January 2021 to present

Lawyer : Sison Law Office

Dumaguete City

May 31, 2022 to present

**TRAININGS ATTENDED:**

**Post Graduate Diploma in Applied Criminology (PGDip-AC)**

LEAPS Academy

Mabalacat City, Pampanga, Philippines

September 4-17, 2024

## **Certified Cyber Crime Investigation Specialist**

Top 1 on Oral Defense as an Expert Witness: 97%

Top 1 Overall: 95 %

Isabela State University

April 6-12, 2024

## **Certified Security Professional**

Top 1 of Class 657: 89.23%

Philippine Society for Industrial Security International, Inc.

November 25, 2023

## **Certified Criminalistics Specialist**

Top 3 in Oral Defense as an Expert Witness: 95%

Top 5 Overall: 93.95

Philippine Criminalistics Society, Inc.

July 9-16, 2023

## **SEMINARS ATTENDED:**

- National Criminology Conference**

MIDAS Hotel, Pasay City

April 30, 2022

- Introduction to Cybercrime and Basic Digital Investigative Analysis**

CHAPTERHOUSE PUBLISHING INCORPORATED

April 23, 2022

- Juvenile Delinquency and Juvenile Justice System**

CHAPTERHOUSE PUBLISHING INCORPORATED

April 12, 2022