

Justice at the Breaking Point: Legal Advocates' Critical Reflections on the Philippines' Most Contentious Issues

Jian Liegh G. Cansancio, John Anthony M. Pasilan, Juanito P. Lataza Jr., Dodelon F. Sabijon
Esmeraldo Damuag, Vanzniel Rover Nillama

Bachelor of Science in Criminology, Faculty of the College of Criminal Justice, University of Cebu,
Cebu City,

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ABSTRACT

The research adopted a qualitative research design, specifically using transcendental phenomenology, to explore and understand the perspectives and lived experiences of legal advocates on major national issues in the Philippines. The informants for this study were the legal advocates from San Fernando, Cebu, Philippines, and it was conducted there, who are willing to share their insights on major national issues. A total of 10 informants with at least one year as legal advocate were interviewed one-on-one to gain a deeper understanding of their perspectives on legal matters affecting the country.

In gathering of data, the researchers utilized self-made-panel approached interview guide consisting of the following parts; part 1, perspectives of the informants on major national issues in the Philippines; part 2, legal community perceive its role in addressing current national issues; part 3, prevailing views of the legal community on the effectiveness of existing laws and policies related to national issues; part 4, legal community assess the government's adherence to the rule of law in handling national issues; part 5, recent national issues affected the practice of law and legal profession in the country; part 6, perspective of the legal community on the balance between human rights and national security in policy-making. It was collected and analyzed.

Results revealed that on the perspectives of the informants in the performance of their function, the themes generated were: For the perspectives of the informant on the major national issues in the Philippines, the themes generated were: Systemic Corruption and Governance Breakdown and Rule of Law and Institutional Integrity. For the perception of legal advocates in its role in addressing current national issues, the themes generated were: Lawyers as Reformers and Policy Influencers and Legal Advocacy as Public Education and Empowerment.

For the views of the legal community on the effectiveness of existing laws and policies related to national issues, the themes generated were: Enforcement Gaps and Governance Challenges and Political Will and Civic Engagement as Drivers of Legal Effectiveness.

For the legal community's assessment of the government's adherence to the rule of law in handling national issues, the themes generated were: Selective Enforcement and Politicization of Legal Processes and Oversight, Transparency, and Accountability Mechanisms. For the effects of the national issues in the practice of law and legal profession in the country, the themes generated were: Ethical Integrity and Professional Responsibility and Adaptation, Innovation, and Resilience in Legal Practice. For the perspectives of the legal community on the balance between human rights and national security in policy-making, the themes generated were: Balancing Rights and Security as a Legal Imperative and Rule of Law and Due Process as Safeguards.

Keywords: Perspective, Legal Advocates, Major National Issues, Phenomenology, SanFernando Cebu, Philippines.

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SCOPE

Introduction

Rationale of the Study

National issues are the pressing concerns that affect the overall well-being of a country and its citizens, including economic challenges, social justice, environmental problems, and public health crises. These issues often shape public opinion, influence policy-making, and drive political debate, revealing the attitudes and values of the populace (Fiveable, 2024).

Reports and studies worldwide have highlighted key global issues affecting people and communities. Amnesty International's *The State of the World's Human Rights: April 2025* focuses on human rights violations caused by conflicts, discrimination, and misuse of technology (Amnesty International, 2025). Corruption is also a fundamental problem for development. Corruption harms the poor and vulnerable the most, increasing costs and reducing access to basic services, such as health, education, social programs, and even justice (Diagana & Diagne, 2023). Cybersecurity threats are acts performed by individuals with harmful intent, whose goal is to steal data, cause damage to or disrupt computing systems. Cyber threats can originate from a variety of sources, from hostile nation states and terrorist groups, to individual hackers, to trusted individuals like employees or contractors, who abuse their privileges to perform malicious acts (Sillam, 2023).

Globally, countries face major challenges like human rights violations, extrajudicial killings, corruption, political dynasties, and territorial disputes like West Philippine Sea that weaken democracy and stability. These issues aim to be addressed through stronger international cooperation, accountability mechanisms, and the promotion of justice and equality, so that people everywhere can live in societies built on fairness, dignity, and peace.

In the country, one significant law in the Philippines addressing national issues is Republic Act No. 9851, the Philippine Act on Crimes Against International Humanitarian Law, Genocide, and Other Crimes Against Humanity. This law was enacted to criminalize grave human rights violations such as extrajudicial killings, torture, enforced disappearances, and other abuses often linked to corruption, political conflicts, and misuse of authority. Its aim for Filipinos is to uphold justice, protect human dignity, and ensure accountability by aligning domestic legislation with international humanitarian standards. By doing so, it empowers citizens and legal advocates to demand transparency and responsibility from leaders, strengthens the fight against corruption and political dynasties, and reinforces the Philippines' commitment to rule of law in both internal governance and external disputes like the West Philippine Sea.

The intensification of major national issues in the Philippines is driven by various factors, including political, socioeconomic, and environmental challenges. Implementation often involves government policies, legal frameworks, and advocacy efforts aimed at addressing concerns such as poverty, corruption, and human rights violations. The advantages of tackling these issues include improved governance, economic growth, and social stability, which contribute to a more equitable society. Legal advocates play a crucial role by ensuring accountability, defending human rights, and pushing for policy reforms that protect vulnerable communities (PinayWise, 2024).

Literature search revealed that there are limited studies conducted on the perspectives of legal advocates regarding major national issues in the Philippines, particularly in San Fernando, Cebu. One relevant study is the work of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, which discusses legal challenges and policy reforms addressed during the 20th National Convention of Lawyers held in Cebu, where over 4,000 lawyers gathered to tackle pressing legal concerns (Abogado, 2025). Another study by DivinaLaw (2023) explores legal education, legislative advocacy, and policy reform, highlighting the role of legal professionals in shaping national policies and addressing socio-economic issues. Additionally, the Cebu Provincial Government has engaged legal experts in discussions on governance and justice reforms, emphasizing the importance of legal advocacy in addressing national concerns (Sugbo News, 2024).

Despite the crucial role of legal advocates in addressing major national issues in the Philippines, there remains a gap in research exploring their perspectives. Existing studies primarily focus on policy implementation and its effects on governance and society, thereby overlooking the personal and operational challenges faced by legal professionals in navigating complex legal systems, advocating for justice, and influencing policy reforms. Understanding their experiences is essential in improving legal frameworks and ensuring more effective solutions to national concerns.

As criminology students, we understand the importance of learning about laws, crimes, and justice in society. This study looks at the opinions of legal experts on major national issues in the Philippines. By hearing their views, we gained a clearer understanding of the challenges and solutions related to these issues. This research helped us broaden our knowledge and prepare for future roles in law enforcement and criminal justice.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This study was primarily anchored on Interactionism Theory by Mead (1934) and supported by Social Comparison Theory by Festinger (1954) and Cognitive Dissonance Theory by Festinger (1957).

Interactionism Theory by Mead (1934) focuses on how individuals develop their sense of self through social interactions. Mead argued that the self is not an inherent trait but is formed through communication and engagement with others. He introduced the concept of the "I" and the "Me", where the "I" represents the spontaneous, individual aspect of a person, while the "Me" is the socialized aspect shaped by societal expectations.

A key component of Mead's theory is the Generalized Other, which refers to the collective attitudes and expectations of society that individuals internalize. Through interactions, people learn to see themselves from the perspective of others, shaping their behaviors and self-concept. Mead emphasized that meaning is constructed through symbols such as language and gestures that allow individuals to navigate social life (Mead, 1934).

Interactionism Theory suggests that reality is socially constructed through shared meanings. People interpret and respond to their environment based on the meanings they attach to objects, events, and interactions. This theory highlights the dynamic nature of human communication and the continuous evolution of self-identity through social engagement (Mead, 1934).

On the other hand, Social Comparison Theory by Festinger (1954) as a support theory, proposes that individuals have an inborn motivation to evaluate themselves by comparing their abilities, opinions, and traits to others. This comparison helps people understand their own standing in society and reduces uncertainty about their self-worth.

Festinger identified two types of social comparison: Upward Comparison and Downward Comparison. Upward comparison occurs when individuals compare themselves to those who are perceived as superior, often leading to motivation for self-improvement. Downward comparison, on the other hand, involves comparing oneself to those perceived as worse off, which can boost self-esteem (Festinger, 1954).

The theory also suggests that people prefer to compare themselves to others who are similar in relevant attributes. When objective standards are unavailable, individuals rely on social comparison to assess their abilities and opinions. This process influences self-perception, motivation, and even social behavior, shaping how people interact within their communities

(Festinger, 1954).

Cognitive Dissonance Theory by Festinger (1957), as a support theory, describes the psychological discomfort that arises when an individual holds conflicting beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors. This discomfort motivates people to reduce the inconsistency by changing their beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors to restore internal harmony.

This theory explains that if a person smokes despite knowing that smoking causes cancer, they experience cognitive dissonance. To reduce this discomfort, they might either quit smoking, justify their behavior by downplaying the risks, or seek information that supports their habit (Festinger, 1957).

Festinger argued that the greater the dissonance, the stronger the motivation to resolve it. People may alter their perceptions, seek new information, or change their actions to align with their beliefs. This theory has been widely applied in psychology, marketing, and decision-making, explaining why individuals strive for consistency in their thoughts and behaviors (Festinger, 1957).

In conducting this research, it is imperative to consider pertinent legal frameworks and policies. The implementation of Republic Act No. 9851, the Philippine Act on Crimes Against International Humanitarian Law, Genocide, and Other Crimes Against Humanity, serves as a cornerstone for addressing grave national concerns by criminalizing abuses such as extrajudicial killings, torture, and corruption. The law focuses on upholding justice, protecting human dignity, and ensuring accountability by aligning domestic governance with international humanitarian standards.

As mentioned in the Republic Act No. 6713 or also known as Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees, this law promotes transparency and accountability in government by setting ethical standards for public officials. Legal advocates often cite this law when addressing corruption and misconduct in public service. If a government official is found guilty of bribery or abuse of power, this law provides the basis for legal action to ensure integrity in governance.

In accordance with the 1987 Philippine Constitution – Article III (Bill of Rights), this section of the Constitution guarantees fundamental rights such as freedom of speech, due process, and equal protection under the law. Legal advocates use this as a foundation when addressing human rights violations, ensuring that individuals are protected from unlawful actions by the government or private entities. If a person is arrested without proper legal procedures, advocates may invoke the Bill of Rights to demand justice and fair treatment.

Additionally, Republic Act No. 10175 or also known as Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012, with the rise of digital technology, this law protects individuals from cyber-related offenses such as online fraud, identity theft, and cyberbullying. Legal advocates use this law to safeguard people from digital crimes and ensure responsible use of online platforms. For instance, if someone is harassed or defamed online, this law provides legal remedies to hold perpetrators accountable.

According to Mendoza (2020), the empirical evidence linking political dynasties to the imposition of term limits under the 1987 Constitution. Evidence has shown that political families have circumvented term limits by strategically deploying more clanmates in elected positions, increasing the number of political dynasties in the country over time. This was largely possible because other reforms that were meant to be implemented along with political term limits were not successfully implemented since the 1987 Constitution was crafted.

According to Henderson (2020), it explains that women migrants' position in the global labour market is constrained by gender and racial divisions of labour, and the work they are offered is often insecure, low-paid and concentrated in feminised sectors of the economy, such as domestic work. It is not only women who predominantly perform domestic work, but also women of a certain race, ethnicity, socio-economic class and nationality.

According to Luyun et al., (2021), the current administration of the Republic of the Philippines is seen as an ardent advocate of federalism. This research study purports to explore the appreciation and understanding of the youth – specifically the Liberal Arts students in higher educational institutions who have the knowledge on the government forms, laws, and history of our system of government as regards a possible shift in the system of government.

According to Fabro (2024), to live in this world is a great opportunity, but to take away the right to life is against humanity. Human rights refer to the rights that are enjoyed by all individuals, regardless of their nationality, race, or origin (United Nations). The right to express, the right to life, and a life free from discrimination are

some of the features of human rights. These rights are protected by the constitution of each country to ensure that individuals live peacefully. However, there are instances where these rights are being violated and victims cannot defend themselves.

According to Lamchek & Jopson (2024), they explain that President Rodrigo Duterte launched one of the world's most lethal and aggressive anti-drug campaigns known as the War on Drugs in the Philippines. The War on Drugs unleashed an unprecedented level of violence while enjoying high public approval in the Philippines throughout Duterte's presidency.

Based on the study of Acuna et al., (2025) Dynasties have long dominated Philippine politics. Despite the theoretical consensus that dynastic rule erodes democratic accountability, there is limited empirical evidence establishing dynasties' true impact on development. A key challenge has been developing robust metrics for characterizing dynasties that facilitate meaningful comparisons across geographies and election cycles. These findings suggest that clan structure, rather than power concentration alone may be the chief determinant of a ruling dynasty's developmental impact.

Based on the study of Davis et al., (2024) Corruption plays a central role in underdevelopment in the Philippines, yet there is no reliable, non-aggregate, and periodic measurement for corruption in the country. This study demonstrates the use of statistical techniques to synthesize information from public procurement contracts into one indicator to measure corruption risk for each province in the Philippines from 2004 to 2018.

Based on the study of Hapal et al., (2022), it examines the concept of protection beyond the conventional human rights state-centric perspective. The article accounts for protective practices, strategies, and tactics that activists use to keep themselves and their livelihoods safe as they are engaged in rights promotion.

Based on the study of Werfhorst et al., (2022), it explains that the COVID-19 pandemic has disordered the educational process across the globe, as schools suddenly had to provide their teaching in an online environment. One question that raised immediate concern is the potential impact of this forced and rapid digitalization on inequalities in the learning process by social class, migration background and gender.

Based on the study of Ciocchini & Lamchek (2023) it states that the "War on Drugs" in the Philippines resulted in the arrest of an unprecedented number of suspects of drug-related crimes. Legal professionals managed this deluge of cases by embracing the device of plea bargaining, previously banned from those types of cases. Given the weakness of the legal cases of drug-related offences assembled by the police, conviction of the accused is often in serious tension with the duty and commitment of legal professionals to decide cases on the basis of law and evidence.

The Problem

Statement of the Problem

This study explored the justice at the breaking point: legal advocates' critical reflections on the Philippines' most contentious issues in San Fernando, Cebu.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the perspectives of the informants on major national issues in the Philippines?
2. How does the legal community perceive its role in addressing current national issues?
3. What are the prevailing views of the legal community on the effectiveness of existing laws and policies related to national issues?
4. How does the legal community assess the government's adherence to the rule of law in handling national issues?
5. How have recent national issues affected the practice of law and legal profession in the country?
6. What are the perspective of the legal community on the balance between human rights and national security in policy-making?

Significance of the Study

The outcome of this study would benefit the following people or institutions:

Legal Advocates and Practitioners. Lawyers, judges, and legal professionals will benefit from the study as it provides insights into different perspectives on national issues. It helps them improve their approach in legal advocacy, ensuring justice and fairness in the country.

Government and Policymakers. Lawmakers and government officials can use the study's findings to create laws and policies that effectively address national concerns. It serves as a guide for making decisions that align with legal principles and benefit the people.

Educational Institutions and Law Students. Universities, law schools, and students will gain a clearer understanding of real-world legal challenges. This study helps improve legal education and prepares students for their future roles in law and governance.

Civil Society and Advocacy Groups. Organizations focused on human rights, governance reforms, and social justice can use this study to strengthen their arguments. It provides valuable legal perspectives that support advocacy efforts and policy changes.

General Public. Citizens can learn about major national issues through the perspectives of legal advocates. The study promotes awareness, helping people make informed decisions and actively participate in discussions about governance and justice.

Media and Journalists. Reporters and writers will find the study useful for covering legal and national issues accurately. It helps them present well-researched news stories and analysis that educate the public on legal matters.

Business and Private Sector. Companies and business leaders can understand the legal implications affecting industries, labor rights, and corporate governance. This study helps them comply with laws and make informed business decisions.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Advocacy groups working on social issues, environmental protection, and human rights can use the study to support their initiatives. It provides legal viewpoints that help push for necessary policy reforms.

International Organizations and Legal Scholars. Global institutions and researchers studying governance and legal systems can use this study to understand the Philippine legal landscape. It contributes to comparative legal studies and international cooperation.

Academe. Professors and scholars in universities can use this study to enhance legal education and research. It serves as a foundation for academic discussions on law and governance.

Community. Local communities benefit from this study as it promotes awareness of national issues and legal perspectives. It empowers people to understand their rights and actively engage in civic participation.

Researchers. Those studying law and governance can use this study to examine legal trends and policy effectiveness. It provides useful insights for analyzing how legal advocacy shapes national concerns.

Future Researchers. This study serves as a valuable reference for future scholars exploring legal advocacy and national concerns. It helps researchers analyze trends and build upon existing studies for continuous legal development.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative method of research with an aid of a questionnaire. To inquire the justice at the breaking point: legal advocates' critical reflections on the Philippines' most contentious issues.

Qualitative research is a type of research that explores and provides deeper insights into real-world problems. Instead of collecting numerical data points or intervening or introducing treatments, just like in quantitative research, qualitative research helps generate hypotheses to further investigate and understand quantitative data. Qualitative research gathers participants' experiences, perceptions, and behavior. It answers the hows and whys instead of how many or how much. It could be structured as a standalone study, purely relying on qualitative data, or part of mixed- methods research that combines qualitative and quantitative data (Tenny et al., 2022).

Phenomenological research is to understand a phenomenon's universal nature by exploring the views of those who have experienced it. This approach is popularly used to study lived experience, gain a deeper understanding of how human beings think, and expand a researcher's knowledge about a phenomenon (Delve & Limpaecher, 2022).

In addition, transcendental phenomenology is a philosophical approach to qualitative research methodology that seeks to understand human experience. It is grounded in the concept of setting aside preconceived ideas and allowing phenomena to naturally emerge within their own identity (Husserl, 1970).

Research Environment

This research was conducted in San Fernando, a municipality in Cebu, Philippines, located in the Central Visayas region. It is part of Metro Cebu and sits about 29 kilometers from Cebu City. The town has a population of 72,224 people, based on the 2020 Census, and is known for its economic activities, including poultry farming and cement production. San Fernando is bordered by Naga City to the north, Pinamungajan to the west, the Cebu Strait to the east, and Carcar City to the south. It has a mix of urban and rural areas, making it a suitable location for various research studies.

San Fernando is divided into 21 barangays, each with its own distinct features. Barangays such as Poblacion North and Poblacion South are the central areas, housing government offices, schools, and businesses. Other barangays, like Panadtaran and Sangat, are known for their agricultural and coastal activities. These barangays provide a diverse environment where legal professionals and educators can be found, making them ideal for gathering valuable insights.

San Fernando has a legal community that plays a key role in handling national legal issues. The Municipal Trial Court and Prosecutor's Office manage local legal cases, while public legal assistance centers provide free legal aid to those who need it. Private law firms offer legal services to businesses and individuals, covering areas such as corporate law, criminal defense, and human rights. Legal advocacy groups focus on policy reforms and human rights protection.

Research Informants

The informants for this study were the legal advocates from San Fernando, Cebu, Philippines, who are willing to share their insights on major national issues. A total of 10 informants with at least one year as legal advocate were interviewed one-on-one to gain a deeper understanding of their perspectives on legal matters affecting the country.

To be selected, participants must meet the following criteria: (1) Be a licensed lawyer or law professor in the Philippines. (2) Have at least one year of experience in legal practice or teaching, specializing in fields such as constitutional law, criminal law, human rights, or public policy. (3) Be willing to participate in interviews or discussions. (4) Be living or working in San Fernando, Cebu, to make it easier to gather information. A purposive

sampling method was used, meaning participants were carefully chosen based on their legal expertise and ability to provide valuable insights.

This study explored legal advocates' perspectives on major national issues, including the rule of law, human rights, judicial processes, governance, and legal reforms. Their views helped provide a clearer understanding of how legal professionals analyze and respond to important legal and political challenges in the Philippines.

Research Instruments

In gathering of data, the researchers utilized self-made-panel approached interview guide consisting of the following parts; part 1, perspectives of the informants on major national issues in the Philippines; part 2, legal community perceive its role in addressing current national issues; part 3, prevailing views of the legal community on the effectiveness of existing laws and policies related to national issues; part 4, legal community assess the government's adherence to the rule of law in handling national issues; part 5, recent national issues affected the practice of law and legal profession in the country; part 6, perspective of the legal community on the balance between human rights and national security in policy-making.

The researchers arranged interviews with the informants, explained the matters of confidentiality, prepared consent forms, and ensured that open-ended questions were asked during the interviews. (Please refer to Appendix C for the Interview Guide).

Research Procedures

This section explains how data was collected and analyzed in the study.

Once the research proposal is approved, an Interview Guide (IG) was created and submitted for validation. The researcher prepared transmittal letters and send them to legal institutions and law offices in San Fernando, Cebu, Philippines, requesting permission and scheduling interviews with legal professionals. The study followed ethical guidelines set by the research panel and ethics committee. Before interviews begin, all documents was reviewed and verified to ensure compliance with research standards.

After selecting participants, the researcher organized one-on-one interviews at a safe and convenient location. Before the interviews, the researcher explained the purpose of the study, the role of participants, and their rights, including the choice to withdraw at any time and the assurance of confidentiality. Each participant signed a consent form before proceeding with the interview.

The study used audio recordings and field notes to accurately document responses. Participants shared their views on major national issues, including law enforcement, governance, human rights, and legal reforms. Their insights helped analyze how legal advocates perceive and respond to key challenges in the Philippine justice system.

Data Collection. This study gathered insights from legal professionals in San Fernando, Cebu, Philippines using in-depth interviews and focused group discussions. These methods allowed participants to express their perspectives on major national issues affecting the country. The researcher ensured strict confidentiality of all participants' personal information throughout the process. Interviews and discussions were audio-recorded and later transcribed word-for-word to maintain accuracy. Before participating, individuals was informed of their rights, privacy, and ethical considerations, including their option to withdraw at any time. These data collection methods provided a comprehensive understanding of how legal advocates view important topics such as the justice system, human rights, governance, and legal reforms in the Philippines.

Data Analysis. The gathered information was analyzed using thematic analysis. Responses from interviews and group discussions was carefully examined, coded, and categorized into relevant themes. Key points from participants' statements were grouped into clusters of ideas, helping the researcher understand common viewpoints. These themes were further refined to address specific legal concerns related to national issues. This

structured approach ensures that the study provides a meaningful interpretation of how legal professionals view and respond to major national challenges.

Ethical Considerations

Conducting qualitative research on a significant national issue in the Philippines requires strict ethical standards to ensure the safety and integrity of the study. This research focused on gathering the perspectives of legal advocates in San Fernando, Cebu, and followed the ethical principles of beneficence, non-maleficence, justice, and autonomy throughout the process.

Beneficence. The main goal of this study was to understand the views of legal experts on major national issues and provide them with a platform to express their opinions. The researcher aimed for the findings to contribute to public awareness and better legal practices. After interviews, participants were given useful materials or contacts in case they needed more information or assistance.

Non-maleficence. Participation in the study was completely voluntary. Before joining, individuals were fully informed about the purpose and process of the research. They had the right to withdraw at any time without any consequences. The researcher ensured confidentiality by protecting the participants' identities and securely storing all collected data. Sensitive topics were handled carefully, ensuring the comfort and well-being of participants.

Justice. The study included different legal professionals such as lawyers, judges, and law professors from San Fernando, Cebu, to ensure diverse perspectives. Selection was not based on personal beliefs or political views, but rather on their legal expertise. Every participant's insights were valued equally, and the research findings were presented objectively and fairly.

Autonomy. Participants had full control over their involvement in the study. Consent forms were written in clear and simple language, and there was no pressure to participate. During interviews, they had the freedom to discuss topics they were comfortable with and could skip any questions they preferred not to answer. They were also given the opportunity to review their contributions to ensure accuracy in how their views were presented.

Trustworthiness of Research

To build trustworthiness into your research, you'll need to focus on four key pillars: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Trustworthiness is about ensuring your research is believable and reliable. In qualitative studies, this often comes down to how well your findings represent the realities of your participants (Jansen, 2025).

Credibility. Credibility means that your research truly reflects the real experiences and perspectives of the people you're studying. It's about making sure you're not misrepresenting or distorting what they've shared, so others can trust that your findings are an honest reflection of reality (Jansen, 2025).

Transferability. Transferability is about providing enough detail in your study so others can decide if your findings apply to their own context. You're giving enough information for someone else to see if they can use your research in a different situation, while still making sense of it (Jansen, 2025).

Dependability. Dependability is about showing that your research

process is clear and stable. If someone else were to follow the same steps you took, they should be able to get similar results. It ensures that the research process is predictable and well-documented (Jansen, 2025).

Confirmability. Confirmability means ensuring that your research findings come directly from the data, not your own personal beliefs or opinions. It's about demonstrating that your conclusions are based on what the participants said or what the evidence shows, rather than what you want to believe (Jansen, 2025).

Bracketing and Reflexivity

Bracketing and reflexivity are important in qualitative research, especially when discussing major national issues in the Philippines. Since these topics can be sensitive and complex, the researcher made sure to stay neutral and present the views of legal advocates in San Fernando, Cebu fairly. To avoid personal bias, the researcher carefully set aside personal opinions and focused on accurately representing the perspectives of legal professionals. This approach helped ensure that the findings reflect their genuine thoughts and experiences.

Bracketing. To keep the study fair, the researcher set aside personal beliefs, opinions, and assumptions about major national issues. The focus remained only on the experiences and insights shared by legal professionals. During interviews, the researcher avoided leading questions and encouraged participants to freely express their thoughts, ensuring that their views were represented without outside influence.

Reflexivity. The researcher also reflected regularly on their role in the research process. This included thinking about how their background, behavior, or relationship with participants might affect the way questions were asked or how answers were understood. The researcher took notes throughout the study and discussed their thoughts with peers or mentors to help recognize and reduce any personal bias. These reflections helped strengthen the accuracy and fairness of the findings.

Definition of Terms

The succeeding terms are explained operationally to help you better understand the study:

Legal Community Assess the Government's Adherence to the Rule of Law in Handling National Issues. This refers to how lawyers, judges, and other legal professionals evaluate whether the government is following the law fairly and properly when dealing with important problems in the country.

Legal Community Perceive its Role in Addressing Current National Issues. This means how members of the legal field see or understand their responsibilities and contributions in helping solve the country's present problems.

Perspectives of the Informants on Major National Issues in the Philippines. This refers to the opinions, views, or thoughts shared by the informants about the biggest problems currently facing the country.

Perspective of the Legal Community on the Balance Between Human Rights and National Security in Policy-Making. This means how legal professionals view the importance of protecting people's rights while also keeping the country safe, and how these two priorities should be

considered when creating government policies.

Present National Issues Affected the Practice of Law and Legal Profession in the Country. This refers to how today's major problems in the country are changing or influencing the work, behavior, and duties of lawyers and others in the legal profession.

Prevailing Views of the Legal Community on the Effectiveness of Existing Laws and Policies Related to National Issues. This means the common opinions or beliefs among legal professionals about whether the current laws and government policies are effective in solving or responding to the country's major problems.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

This chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of data.

Presentation of Data

Consistent with the methodology of this study, the researchers transcribed and translated the responses, and the significant statements were extracted. They formulated core meanings out of the significant statement and classified them into cluster themes from where they created the emergent themes.

For a clear context of this study, each experience of the informant was taken mostly in a dialect known to them, so that they may expressed their thoughts open-handedly.

The following are the emergent themes:

Perspectives of the informant on the major national issues in the Philippines

Systemic Corruption and Governance Breakdown

Rule of Law and Institutional Integrity

Perception of legal advocates in its role in addressing current national issues

Lawyers as Reformers and Policy Influencers

Legal Advocacy as Public Education and Empowerment

Views of the legal community on the effectiveness of existing laws and policies related to national issues

Enforcement Gaps and Governance Challenges

Political Will and Civic Engagement as Drivers of Legal Effectiveness

Legal community's assessment of the government's adherence to the rule of law in handling national issues

Selective Enforcement and Politicization of Legal Processes

Oversight, Transparency, and Accountability Mechanisms

Effects of the national issues in the practice of law and legal profession in the country

Ethical Integrity and Professional Responsibility

Adaptation, Innovation, and Resilience in Legal Practice

Perspectives of the legal community on the balance between human rights and national security in policy-making

Balancing Rights and Security as a Legal Imperative

Rule of Law and Due Process as Safeguards

To better understand the rich information we gathered, we distilled the emergent themes into six core areas of concern: first, perspectives of the informant on the major national issues in the Philippines; second, perception of legal advocates in its role in addressing current national issues; third, views of the legal community on the effectiveness of existing laws and policies related to national issues; fourth, legal community's assessment of the government's adherence to the rule of law in handling national issues; fifth, effects of the national issues in the practice of law and legal profession in the country; and sixth, perspectives of the legal community on the balance between human rights and national security in policy-making.

I. Perspectives of the informant on the major national issues in the Philippines

The informants shared a wide range of views about the most serious problems facing the Philippines, shaped by both their professional experiences and personal encounters with the justice system and society. Their insights reveal that national issues are not only legal or political in nature, but also deeply connected to everyday realities such as corruption, inequality, and the weakening of public trust. From their responses, two major themes emerged:

Systemic Corruption and Governance Breakdown. This theme captures how informants perceive the erosion of institutional integrity and the normalization of corrupt practices across multiple levels of government. Their perspectives reveal a deep frustration with the lack of accountability, politicized decision-making, and the weakening of democratic safeguards highlighting how these systemic failures obstruct genuine reform, diminish public trust, and perpetuate cycles of impunity in Philippine governance.

Informant 8 expressed deep concern over the systemic nature of corruption in the Philippines, emphasizing its role as a persistent barrier to national progress. He described how, despite the country's inherent wealth, public funds are routinely siphoned off by corrupt officials, leaving essential services underfunded and the nation burdened with debt. This observation highlights his critical awareness of institutional dysfunction and the moral dilemma faced by individuals within the system. As stated,

The most pressing issue right now is corruption. The Philippines is actually a wealthy country, it's just that the money is being stolen. Corruption is a major barrier to effective governance. It has become systemic. When someone enters government service and realizes how the system works, it becomes difficult to fight it because it's one person against the entire office. If people don't call it out, the stealing continues. As a result, the Philippines ends up in debt. Corruption is truly a barrier to progress. The Philippines is now one of the lowest-ranking countries, with trillions in debt. Poverty remains unresolved because instead of using funds to improve the welfare of our citizens, the money ends up in the pockets of corrupt officials (IDI8:SS1).

Informant 1 reflected on the unequal impact of corruption and injustice within Philippine society, emphasizing how individuals with limited means are disproportionately vulnerable to systemic failures. He described how access to justice is often reserved for the wealthy, who can afford competent legal representation, while the poor are more likely to face conviction. His account underscores a critical awareness of structural inequality and the enduring presence of bribery within the legal system. As stated,

In the impact of a Philippine society, the members of the society which persons who have lesser means or a persons who have lesser in life are the most vulnerable in regard to these issues. Because as I see it, only the rich people can obtain justice and the people who have lesser in life usually will be the one to be convicted of other crimes that will be charged against them. Because the rich people have the means to obtain good lawyers and I believe you also are able to see it that there are still corrupt government officials that would accept bribe and these legal systems are still have a long way to have a justice for everyone, even the poor (IDI1:SS3).

Informant 10 offered a broad and critical perspective on persistent

structural issues in Philippine society, particularly corruption and political dynasties. He emphasized that these problems transcend administrations and remain unresolved despite widespread public discourse and legal scrutiny. He noted that such issues fall under political law and have deeply affected the legal system, citing the West Philippine Sea dispute and the outspoken stance of former Justice Carpio as emblematic of the legal community's concern. His account reflects a collective ethical stance among legal professionals: even when defending clients accused of corruption, the broader imperative is to address systemic failures for the benefit of the Filipino people. As stated,

Philippine society, you can see the discourse about every issue online. It's not looking good for our government because they have to address this, and many administrations have come and gone but still have not solved the issue of corruption or political dynasty. These are constant issues whoever is the sitting president. Most of these

issues fall under political law, and it has affected the legal system. For example, the West Philippine Sea issue created a divide, and former Justice Carpio is very outspoken about it because he is a political law professor in the University of the Philippines. He knows what he's talking about. For the most part, the legal community is against these issues and we want them to be solved. Even if a certain accused of corruption is your client, we still need to fix these issues because the bigger number of Filipinos should benefit. The legal community, we're all against this (IDI10:SS3).

Rule of Law and Institutional Integrity. This theme highlights how informants critically assess the erosion and uneven application of legal standards in the Philippines underscoring concerns about selective enforcement, politicized institutions, and weakened checks and balances. Their perspectives reveal how compromised legal frameworks and inconsistent accountability mechanisms undermine democratic principles, distort public service delivery, and diminish citizen confidence in the justice system.

Informant 6 reflected on the growing public discourse surrounding governance in the Philippines, noting how even those outside the legal profession are now actively voicing their opinions. He observed a widespread erosion of trust in government institutions, highlighting the public's increasing skepticism toward leadership. Despite this, he expressed a strong hope that the nation remains anchored in the rule of law, particularly in upholding the Constitution as the highest legal authority. As stated,

Currently, right now, daghan nag opinions from various people even if not in the legal professions. Also, ang credibility sa atong government karon ang tan aw sa mga tao is nawala na silay trust, naa na silay trust issues sa atong pamamahala karon. But I hope we stand firm with our existing laws, dili nato e bend. We will still ask our law, especially the Constitution is our supreme law (IDI6:SS3). (Currently, right now, there are already many opinions from various people even if not in the legal professions. Also, the credibility of our government now, the view of the people is that they no longer have trust, they now have trust issues with our governance today. But I hope we stand firm with our existing laws, let's not bend them. We will still rely on our law, especially the Constitution as our supreme law.)

Informant 1 emphasized the disproportionate vulnerability of economically disadvantaged individuals within Philippine society, particularly in relation to justice and legal accountability. He pointed out that wealthier citizens are more likely to secure favorable outcomes due to their access to competent legal representation, while those with fewer resources often face conviction. His account reveals a critical view of systemic inequality and the persistence of corruption within the justice system. As stated,

In the impact of a Philippine society, the members of the society which persons who have lesser means or a persons who have lesser in life are the most vulnerable in regard to these issues. Because as I see it, only the rich people can obtain justice and the people who have lesser in life usually will be the one to be convicted of other crimes that will be charged against them. Because the rich people have the means to obtain good lawyers and I believe you also are able to see it that there are still corrupt government officials that would accept bribe and these legal systems are still have a long way to have a justice for everyone, even the poor (IDI1:SS3).

Informant 10 discussed the persistent political and legal challenges confronting Philippine society, particularly the unresolved issues of corruption and political dynasties that persist across administrations. He noted how these concerns, rooted in political law, continue to erode public trust and have far-reaching effects on the legal system. His reflection also highlighted the legal community's collective stance against these systemic problems, emphasizing the need for reform regardless of professional obligations. As stated,

Philippine society, you can see the discourse about every issue online. It's not looking good for our government because they have to address this, and many administrations have come and gone but still have not solved the issue of corruption or political dynasty. These are constant issues whoever is the sitting president. Most of these issues fall under political law, and it has affected the legal system. For example, the West Philippine Sea issue created a divide, and former Justice Carpio is very outspoken about it because he is a political law professor in the University of the Philippines. He knows what he's talking about. For the most part, the legal community is against these issues and we want them to be solved. Even if a certain accused of corruption is your client, we

still need to fix these issues because the bigger number of Filipinos should benefit. The legal community, we're all against this (IDI10:SS3).

Perception of legal advocates in its role in addressing current national issues

The informants shared thoughtful and layered views about the role of legal advocates in the Philippines. They do not see lawyers as limited to courtroom work or technical legal tasks. Instead, they describe legal advocates as important public figures, people who help lead communities, push for reforms, educate others about their rights, and stand firm on ethical principles, especially during difficult times in the country. From these responses, two major ideas emerged:

Lawyers as Reformers and Policy Influencers. This theme highlights how legal advocates strategically leverage their expertise, public credibility, and institutional access to shape national discourse, challenge systemic injustices, and influence policy development. Informants emphasize how lawyers navigate complex legal and political terrains mobilizing litigation, public education, and legislative engagement to promote accountability, protect civil liberties, and advance structural reforms in response to pressing national issues.

Informant 10 described the legal community's role as vigilant guardians of the law, emphasizing their responsibility to monitor and speak out against potential violations. He noted that prominent legal figures often contribute to public discourse on major issues, such as Attorney Macalintal on election matters and former Justice Carpio on territorial disputes. His account reflects a principled view of legal advocacy, where opinions are shared to uphold the integrity of the law, even if not universally accepted. As stated,

So the legal community, we're like the watchdogs when it comes to possible violations of the law because we know the law. If you're looking for someone who has an opinion about any legal issue, some famous lawyer probably has it. For example, the postponement of the barangay and SK election, we have Attorney Macalintal, a renowned election law practitioner. When it comes to West Philippine Sea, we have former Justice Carpio. I'm not saying the opinions of these people are adapted immediately, but you have to entertain their thoughts without necessarily accepting them. That's our role, we are the watchdogs, and we try to make sure that no law is violated. In a perfect world, the law is mandatory, no one is above the law, and everyone should follow the law. That's the role of legal advocates (IDI10:SS5).

Informant 6 emphasized the influential role of legal professionals in shaping public opinion and guiding societal understanding of legal processes. He noted that the trust placed in lawyers allows their insights to significantly impact the beliefs and perspectives of others, particularly in matters involving governance and justice. His reflection underscores the responsibility that comes with legal expertise in fostering informed civic engagement. As stated,

Since we have the knowledge in the legal system, we have greatly influenced people based on what we say, what we input. Since they trusted us lawyers sa kani nga mga proseso. We influence greatly to their views and beliefs (IDI6:SS7). (Since we have the knowledge in the legal system, we have greatly influenced people based on what we say, what we input. Since they trusted us lawyers in these processes. We influence greatly their views and beliefs.)

Informant 1 highlighted the integral role of legal advocates in shaping legislative frameworks, emphasizing how their expertise in law positions them to contribute meaningfully to policy development. He underscored the profession's capacity to influence the creation of laws that serve the broader interests of society. As stated,

We, legal advocates, usually become part of any legislative structures because we have more knowledge on laws and that is why we could influence good laws for the society (IDI1:SS7).

Legal Advocacy as Public Education and Empowerment. This theme highlights how legal advocates actively engage in public education, community dialogue, and rights-based awareness campaigns, strategically translating complex legal concepts into accessible knowledge for diverse audiences. Informants emphasize how

lawyers recalibrate their communication styles, outreach methods, and institutional partnerships to empower citizens, foster legal literacy, and promote participatory governance in response to evolving national challenges.

Informant 5 emphasized the vital role of legal advocates in bridging the gap between legal technicalities and public understanding, especially for lay citizens. He underscored the need for vigilance in asserting rights amid widespread corruption, and encouraged proactive civic engagement, particularly among students. His account reflects a belief in organized advocacy and participatory action as tools for demanding accountability and equitable access to resources. As stated,

The role of the legal advocates, they play a vital role in addressing the current issues. It is inherent for them to explain to the citizens, especially those layman who don't understand what are legal technicalities to be vigilant. The citizens should be vigilant in asserting their rights. Like recently, we know that government are corrupt. How do we assert our rights? We are helpless. How? And how do you petition the government to redress the room? As a student, what do you think? You can organize school organization, gather more and more signatures, petition to government to address on this issues, especially on the budget for the education. Trainings, research, such as this, you should be given allowance to spend. At least the tanspo allowance. In other countries, all students are free for their transportation (IDI5:SS5).

Informant 4 described his approach to empowering clients and their families by encouraging them to exhaust all available remedies, including speaking out on issues that affect them. He emphasized the role of legal practitioners in influencing public discourse and legislative reform by amplifying the voices of those directly impacted. His account reflects a belief in participatory advocacy as a means to shape better laws. As stated,

In my part, I usually talk to my client. I'm telling them to exhaust all remedies if ever part of which is to speak out that how we influence the public. For me, that's I influence the public, I talk to the family of my client telling them if they have anything they want to say, they should speak it out so that the congress may feel it and enact better laws (IDI4:SS7).

Informant 6 emphasized the far-reaching impact of societal issues, noting that they affect not only the legal domain but also the everyday lives of Filipinos. He underscored the duty of legal practitioners to serve as guides and resources for both government officials and ordinary citizens, given their deeper understanding of the law. His account reflects a strong sense of civic responsibility and the belief that legal expertise should be used to empower others. As stated,

With these issues, affected man gyud not only sa legal gani but in our daily lives as Filipinos. Since we legal practitioners know the laws more than any other people, it's our duty and responsibility to guide those in the government and also in the ordinary people (IDI6:SS6). (With these issues, it's really affected not only in the legal aspect but also in our daily lives as Filipinos. Since we legal practitioners know the laws more than any other people, it's our duty and responsibility to guide those in the government and also the ordinary people.)

Views of the legal community on the effectiveness of existing laws and policies related to national issues

The legal community shared thoughtful and honest views about how well current laws and policies are working to solve the country's major problems. While they acknowledged that many laws are already in place to address national issues, they also pointed out that these laws often fall short in practice. According to the informants, the main reasons for this include weak enforcement, political interference, and problems within government systems that prevent laws from being applied fairly and consistently. Despite these challenges, their tone was not purely negative, they also offered ideas for improvement and showed a strong belief in the potential of the legal system to do better. From their responses, two major themes stood out:

Enforcement Gaps and Governance Challenges. This theme highlights how members of the legal community perceive the disconnect between well-crafted laws and their inconsistent implementation underscoring issues such as bureaucratic inefficiency, lack of inter-agency coordination, and susceptibility to political interference. Informants emphasize how these enforcement gaps weaken the intended impact of legal frameworks and contribute to public disillusionment with institutional accountability.

Informant 1 expressed confidence in the adequacy of existing laws and policies in the Philippines, but pointed to a critical gap in their implementation. He emphasized that the real issue lies not in the legal framework itself, but in the inefficiency and failure of those tasked with enforcing it. His account highlights a disconnect between legal design and operational execution. As stated,

I believe the current laws and policies are effective enough only the people who are implementing the laws and policies. The people who are implementing it are not effective and they are not enforcing it (IDI1:SS9).

Informant 4 acknowledged the strength and quality of Philippine laws, describing them as fundamentally sound and effective. However, he pointed out that enforcement remains a critical weakness, with some laws applied inconsistently or improperly. He also noted gaps in legislation, particularly concerning political dynasties and human rights violations, which remain unresolved amid national issues. As stated,

Actually, Philippine laws are really good laws, the only problem is how we enforce the laws but nonetheless with the current national issues we lack laws addressing such, again political dynasty and as to human rights violation. So going back to the question how effective are, very effective, is just that they are enforced in the wrong way sometimes (IDI4:SS9).

Informant 10 underscored the critical role of enforcement in determining the effectiveness of laws, particularly in addressing corruption. He pointed out that while legal frameworks exist, their application is often undermined by preferential treatment and political influence. His account reflects a concern over selective justice and the misuse of pardoning powers, which contribute to public distrust in the legal system. As stated,

I will say the enforcement. For the issue of corruption, the primary offices who will prosecute are probably the Civil Service Commission and the Office of the President. One reason the law fails is because of enforcement and preferential treatment. Because of politics, if someone gives campaign donations, they cannot be prosecuted. No one is above the law, everyone should follow it and answer for violations. Selective enforcement and preferential treatment are reasons for the failure of the law. For example, the president has pardoning powers, meaning if friends commit a crime, they can be pardoned and will not go to jail. This creates a public perception that justice is only for officials' friends, which is not a good thing (IDI10:SS11).

Political Will and Civic Engagement as Drivers of Legal Effectiveness. This theme highlights how legal professionals recognize the pivotal role of political leadership and active citizen participation in translating legal mandates into meaningful outcomes. Informants describe how sustained advocacy, grassroots mobilization, and principled governance recalibrate the effectiveness of laws transforming policy intent into tangible reforms amid complex national challenges.

Informant 10 emphasized that the effectiveness of laws in the Philippines hinges not merely on their content but on the integrity of their enforcement. He identified selective enforcement and preferential treatment often influenced by political alliances and campaign donations as key reasons why anti-corruption laws fail. His account reflects a critical view of how political will and civic engagement shape public trust in the justice system. As stated,

I will say the enforcement. For the issue of corruption, the primary offices who will prosecute are probably the Civil Service Commission and the Office of the President. One reason the law fails is because of enforcement and preferential treatment. Because of politics, if someone gives campaign donations, they cannot be prosecuted. No one is above the law, everyone should follow it and answer for violations. Selective enforcement and preferential treatment are reasons for the failure of the law. For example, the president has pardoning powers, meaning if friends commit a crime, they can be pardoned and will not go to jail. This creates a public perception that justice is only for officials' friends, which is not a good thing (IDI10:SS11).

Informant 5 emphasized that the primary determinant of legal effectiveness lies in the conduct of law enforcers, particularly police officers. He stressed the importance of impartiality and strict adherence to procedure, noting that the seriousness with which officers uphold the law directly influences public trust and justice outcomes. His account reflects a belief in procedural integrity as a cornerstone of enforcement. As stated,

Number one factor is the concentration on how the police officer, the enforcers on how they take this law seriously without favor, without deviation as to the procedure (IDI5:SS11).

Informant 6 noted the increasing involvement of the legal profession, particularly the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP), in addressing national issues through inter-agency collaboration. He cited a recent initiative involving the IBP and a government commission focused on infrastructure and anti-corruption efforts, as endorsed by President BBM. His account reflects a growing institutional commitment to legal participation in governance reforms. As stated,

Okay, karon ang legal namo profession is IBP is very much involved na sa mga issues. They cooperate with different government agencies. Lately, I saw an article nga ang IBP, the Integrated Party of the Philippines is doing a collaboration with the Commission and Infrastructure, katong gi kuan ni President BBM nga more sa corruption. So, naa silay plans nga mo involve napud ang legal profession ana (IDI6:SS12). (Okay, now our legal profession, the IBP, is very much involved in the issues. They cooperate with different government agencies. Lately, I saw an article that the IBP, the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, is doing a collaboration with the Commission and Infrastructure, the one initiated by President BBM that focuses on corruption. So, they have plans to involve the legal profession in that as well.)

Legal community's assessment of the government's adherence to the rule of law in handling national issues

The legal community shared thoughtful and often critical views about how the government follows the rule of law when dealing with national issues. Informants agreed that the rule of law is a basic part of a healthy democracy. It ensures fairness, protects rights, and keeps leaders accountable. However, they also expressed serious concerns. Many said that laws are not applied equally to everyone, and that political interests often influence legal decisions. Others pointed out that some institutions meant to protect the rule of law are weak or easily pressured. These concerns show that while the idea of the rule of law is respected, its actual practice is often inconsistent and fragile. From their responses, two major themes emerged:

Selective Enforcement and Politicization of Legal Processes. This theme highlights how members of the legal community critically observe the uneven application of laws and the politicization of legal institutions underscoring how enforcement decisions are often influenced by power dynamics, partisan interests, and selective targeting. Informants describe how these practices distort the rule of law, erode judicial independence, and compromise public confidence in the fairness of legal proceedings.

Informant 10 critically examined the role of enforcement in the perceived failure of anti-corruption laws in the Philippines. He pointed to selective prosecution and preferential treatment particularly for political allies and campaign donors as key barriers to justice. He also highlighted how the president's pardoning powers can reinforce public perceptions of impunity among officials. His account underscores the importance of political will and civic engagement in restoring trust in the legal system. As stated,

I will say the enforcement. For the issue of corruption, the primary offices who will prosecute are probably the Civil Service Commission and the Office of the President. One reason the law fails is because of enforcement and preferential treatment. Because of politics, if someone gives campaign donations, they cannot be prosecuted. No one is above the law, everyone should follow it and answer for violations. Selective enforcement and preferential treatment are reasons for the failure of the law. For example, the president has pardoning powers, meaning if friends commit a crime, they can be pardoned and will not go to jail. This creates a public perception that justice is only for officials' friends, which is not a good thing (IDI10:SS11).

Informant 4 reiterated that the core issue affecting legal effectiveness in the Philippines is enforcement. He emphasized that despite the existence of legal standards, their impact is undermined when enforcement is inconsistent or flawed. His account reflects a belief that the laws themselves are not the problem, it is how they are carried out. As stated,

In this question what come to minds is actually still as how the laws are enforced, so that what comes to my mind, the enforcement of the legal standards is the only problem (IDI4:SS14).

Informant 6 expressed frustration over the perceived hypocrisy within government institutions, pointing out that those who create the laws are often the first to violate them. He highlighted Congress as an example, noting that lawmakers possess deep legal knowledge yet are frequently seen as the ones who undermine the very standards they set. His account reflects a deep concern over accountability and the erosion of public trust. As stated,

Actually, the government itself is sila rasad ang nag bend sa law. They know the law because they make it. Like, example sa Congress, they know it because sila ang lawmaker. But they are the ones who go against the law, silay magpabadlong una (IDI6:SS13). (Actually, the government itself, they are also the ones who bend the law. They know the law because they make it. Like, for example in Congress, they know it because they are the lawmakers. But they are the ones who go against the law, they are the ones who misbehave first.)

Oversight, Transparency, and Accountability Mechanisms. This theme highlights how legal professionals assess the strength and limitations of institutional safeguards designed to uphold the rule of law emphasizing the role of independent oversight bodies, open data practices, and citizen-led monitoring. Informants reflect on how recalibrating these mechanisms through reforms, civic engagement, and inter-branch cooperation is essential to restoring trust, deterring abuse, and ensuring government adherence to legal and ethical standards.

Informant 5 expressed concern over lapses in accountability within key oversight institutions, specifically the Office of the Ombudsman and the Commission on Audit (COA). He cited a ghost project as an example of how procedural safeguards can fail when agencies do not fulfill their roles diligently. His account highlights the importance of proper participation and scrutiny in budget approvals to prevent misuse of public funds. As stated,

The office of the ombudsman and the COA, they should do their work properly like what happened in that ghost project. How can you approve? The COA will approve before the release without them participating, the budget cannot be released (IDI5:SS16).

Informant 10 provided a detailed critique of the challenges surrounding government accountability in the Philippines, particularly in prosecuting corruption. He noted that while social media frequently exposes anomalies, legal outcomes often result in acquittals due to the high burden of proof. He advocated for lowering the threshold to establish a prima facie case, shifting the burden to the accused, especially in cases involving private transactions like bid rigging in DPWH flood control projects. His account also questioned the effectiveness of new laws such as the Anti-Terror Law of 2021 and highlighted the lack of mechanisms to address political dynasties and the silence on territorial disputes. As stated,

If you scroll down social media regarding government accountability, it's always about who did what, highlighting anomalies, but when it comes to court, people are found not guilty. To ensure more accountability, we have to lessen the burden of proving corruption crimes. Corruption is often a private transaction, so it's very hard to prove. We should lower the standard to establish a prima facie case, and then it's up to the accused to defend themselves. This would reinforce accountability and make corruption easier to address. For example, in DPWH flood control projects, bid rigging occurs when contractors manipulate the bidding process, so the public suffers. The procurement process is easy to exploit, and better mechanisms are needed. There is a new procurement act, but I don't know how effective it is. In terms of corruption, the mechanisms to ensure government accountability exist, but enforcement and the law itself are not enough. Bid rigging and private transactions are hard to prove unless the law makes it easier. I will only address corruption because mechanisms for political dynasty are not there. I cannot answer on territorial disputes because the current administration is silent. Human rights violations have been cited, but are often overlooked because of bigger issues. I'm not sure yet how effective new laws like the Anti-Terror Law of 2021 are (IDI10:SS16).

Informant 6 strongly affirmed the legal community's commitment to upholding due process, warning that any undermining of legal procedures could lead to widespread disregard for the law and societal disorder. He emphasized the duty of legal practitioners to model and reinforce lawful conduct, recognizing that public adherence to the law often mirrors the integrity of its implementation. As stated,

Of course, mo object jud mi if e undermine na ang legal procedures. What happened man if di ta mo follow sa legal procedures? Then the people will follow, will not obey. We have an orderless community. So, as far as

kaming mga legal practitioner, we guide them gyud nga we have the law, we still follow the law (IDI6:SS15). (Of course, we really object if the legal procedures are undermined. What happens if we don't follow legal procedures? Then the people will follow suit, they will not obey. We have an orderless community. So, as far as we legal practitioners are concerned, we really guide them that we have the law, we still follow the law.)

Effects of the national issues in the practice of law and legal profession in the country

The legal profession in the Philippines is changing in major ways because of the country's ongoing national problems. Informants shared that issues like unstable politics, human rights violations, economic struggles, and weak government institutions have affected not just how lawyers do their work, but also how they see their role in society. These challenges have pushed legal professionals to think beyond traditional courtroom duties. They now face new expectations to be more flexible, more socially aware, and more involved in public service. From the informants' responses, two important themes stood out:

Ethical Integrity and Professional Responsibility. This theme highlights how national issues compel legal practitioners to confront ethical dilemmas and reaffirm their commitment to professional responsibility navigating pressures from politicized environments, client interests, and institutional constraints. Informants describe how lawyers recalibrate their ethical frameworks, advocacy strategies, and decision-making processes to uphold justice, maintain credibility, and preserve the integrity of the legal profession amid systemic challenges.

Informant 5 reflected on the transformative impact of legal advocacy, noting how their experiences have shaped a deeper sense of social responsibility. His statement suggests that engagement with legal issues has not only informed their professional role but also reinforced a commitment to serve the broader needs of society. As stated,

It really shaped us on how we addressed our responsibility for the society (IDI5:SS18)

Informant 10 offered a nuanced reflection on the ethical boundaries of legal practice, distinguishing between formal responsibilities to clients and the court, and broader societal expectations. While he acknowledged a duty to uphold the law and promote professional standards, he questioned whether lawyers are ethically obligated to engage with public violations or political issues in the absence of a client relationship. His account reveals a tension between legal neutrality and civic engagement, grounded in a personal ethic of legal fidelity. As stated,

I don't think we have the ethical responsibilities in terms of, like, I mean, I'm a lawyer. We have the responsibility to our client, to the court. But we also have the ethical responsibility to the public to raise the standards of the bar. There's no ethical responsibility to deal with the public to address violations. You have to be sensitive to local issues. For me, I live here but not engaged in this issue. Do I have the ethical responsibility to address this? No, I don't. I don't have a client to address that issue. In terms of local or national issues, I don't really have a client because these are big political issues. My only responsibility is to ensure that the laws are followed. If friends or strangers ask my opinion on an issue, I repeat the sentiment that the law should be followed. It violates the law if no one follows it, and no one should be above the law. That's always what I say to friends or strangers. I have that responsibility to ensure the law is followed. That's my integral responsibility (IDI10:SS18).

Informant 1 affirmed the ethical integrity of the legal profession, emphasizing that lawyers actively engaged in practice are bound by and generally adhere to the ethical rules and standards established for them. While acknowledging that violations may occur, he noted that such cases are exceptions rather than the norm. His account reflects confidence in the profession's commitment to ethical conduct. As stated,

We, lawyers who are engaged in the practice of law are ethically bound to follow the ethical rules and standards set for us to adhere. I did not see, maybe some few were able to violate it but that's not the prevailing cases. So, most of the lawyers follow ethically on the standards set up on us (IDI1:SS18).

Adaptation, Innovation, and Resilience in Legal Practice. This theme highlights how legal professionals respond to shifting national conditions by embracing adaptive strategies, technological tools, and interdisciplinary approaches reconfiguring traditional modes of practice to remain effective and relevant. Informants emphasize how resilience, continuous learning, and innovative problem-solving enable lawyers to meet emerging demands, address access-to-justice gaps, and sustain their roles in a rapidly evolving legal and socio-political landscape.

Informant 5 highlighted the legal profession's adaptability in response to technological changes, particularly through the adoption of electronic devices and digital case filing systems. He noted that these innovations have become essential to legal practice, though they also depend heavily on the reliability and speed of internet connectivity. His account reflects both progress and ongoing infrastructural challenges. As stated,

There are a lot of ways, legal profession adapted to these changes because like use of electronic device, electronic filing for cases you have to rely on our internet and how fast our internet (IDI5:SS19).

Informant 10 reflected on the evolving role of lawyers in relation to legal reforms and current national issues. He emphasized that a lawyer's foremost responsibility is to ensure that laws are followed, and that this duty extends to supporting policies and legislative efforts aimed at curbing corruption. While acknowledging limited influence over national government decisions, he expressed openness to any initiative that seeks to address systemic problems. His account reveals a sense of political responsibility rooted in legal fidelity and public service. As stated,

Changes to, what do you mean changes? Laws and the current issues. I think the general sentiment is to make, I think, the first responsibility of the lawyer is to ensure that all laws are followed. And we will improve the perception of, I think that's also part of my political responsibility. We will always accommodate the efforts, policies, or the laws that will curb, for example, corruption. We will always welcome those efforts. At the national government, we have very few of our opinions to stop the corruption. These issues really need to be answered, they need to be addressed. Anything that helps to answer or improve our situation from this problem is good for us (IDI10:SS19).

Informant 6 reflected on his early experience in legal practice, noting that broader national issues have yet to significantly affect his professional work. He mentioned flooding as one tangible concern but emphasized that his current focus remains on client prosperity rather than direct engagement with systemic problems. His account reveals a perspective shaped by the immediate scope of practice and the gradual nature of professional impact. As stated,

Well, as a first time lawyer, wala paman kay ko naka kita'g impact on these issues other than nga maka impact ta sa mga baha, mao rana. But as my work as a legal professional, wala pajud sya ma impact kay as I said mga clients ra among ma prosper (IDI6:SS19). (Well, as a first-time lawyer, I haven't really seen an impact from these issues other than how we're affected by flooding, that's about it. But in terms of my work as a legal professional, it hasn't really been impacted yet, because as I said, our focus is just on helping our clients prosper.)

Perspectives of the legal community on the balance between human rights and national security in policy-making

The legal community shared thoughtful views about how human rights and national security should be handled in government policies. Informants understand that these two goals are often seen as being in conflict where protecting the country might mean limiting certain freedoms, or defending rights might seem to weaken security. However, they strongly believe that both can work together if leaders follow fair and principled rules. They emphasized that good governance means protecting people's safety without violating their rights, and that laws should be written and enforced in ways that respect both. From their responses, two major themes stood out:

Balancing Rights and Security as a Legal Imperative. This theme highlights how members of the legal community navigate the complex interplay between safeguarding national security and upholding fundamental human rights continually recalibrating their legal reasoning, advocacy strategies, and policy engagement to ensure that protective measures do not erode civil liberties. Informants emphasize the importance of principled

legal frameworks and inclusive dialogue in crafting policies that respond to threats while preserving democratic values.

Informant 6 underscored the foundational role of due process in upholding justice and social order. He emphasized that adherence to legal procedures is essential to protect individual rights and maintain public trust in the legal system. His statement reflects a principled stance on the rule of law, affirming that

I think the due process, let's follow the due process. That no one shall be deprived of liberty, life, and property (IDI6:SS22).

Informant 4 emphasized the inseparability of human rights and national policymaking, asserting that laws and security measures must align with constitutional protections. He stressed that safeguarding rights should not be compromised in the name of national security, and that both objectives must be pursued in tandem. His account reflects a principled view of governance rooted in constitutional fidelity. As stated,

They should go hand in hand, we cannot make policies that would violate human rights. We, the constitution, protecting everyone so in making national policies and national security, we should go hand in hand (IDI4:SS20).

Informant 10 offered a candid and reflective account of the complexities surrounding the balance between human rights and national security in the Philippines. He acknowledged the existence of laws such as the Anti-Terror Law and the earlier National Security Act but questioned their enforcement and practical impact, noting the absence of convictions and the recurring focus on victims of human rights abuses. His response revealed uncertainty about the principles guiding lawmaking in this area, suggesting that legislators often draw from foreign models without fully addressing local realities. He described the balance between state security and individual rights as a tightrope, especially for frontline enforcers like police and military personnel. His account underscores the difficulty of defining terrorism, enforcing accountability, and maintaining constitutional protections. As stated,

It's hard to answer this question. There is already a law like the anti-terror law, but before that the National Security Act tried to address domestic terrorism. I have not seen anyone go to jail because of the violation. It's always about who is the victim of human rights abuse. I'm not sure if the law is enough or how it was enforced. Did we follow every step? It's hard, like walking on a tightrope. How do we balance human rights and national security? Very hard in terms of practicality, like for the police officer or the army. How do we identify the terrorist? What acts should he do? He is suspected as a terrorist. Principles that guide the creation of laws, human rights, and national security, usually our congressmen copy ideas from other countries. Terrorism is not novel in the Philippines, other countries probably have better laws to enforce both human rights and national security. It's always a balance. I don't know that even brings an answer, but it's my answer. It's hard to answer this question. Balance is a tightrope when you walk through it. I don't practice in this area of law, human rights and national security. I have not had a case like this, although I encountered a red tag. It's not really about the anti-terror law, but more on how to answer for the crimes. I don't really have an answer. It's hard to balance or know what the principle should be between balancing these two rights of the state and human rights (IDI10:SS22).

Rule of Law and Due Process as Safeguards. This theme highlights how legal professionals assert the centrality of rule of law and procedural fairness in mitigating the risks of overreach in security-driven policymaking reinforcing the need for transparent mechanisms, judicial oversight, and rights-based checks. Informants describe how these safeguards are recalibrated to maintain institutional integrity, protect vulnerable populations, and ensure that national responses remain anchored in constitutional and international legal standards.

Informant 6 reaffirmed the centrality of due process in legal practice and governance, emphasizing that it serves as a safeguard against arbitrary deprivation of fundamental rights. His statement reflects a principled commitment to constitutional protections and the rule of law. As stated,

I think the due process, let's follow the due process. That no one shall be deprived of liberty, life, and property (IDI6:SS22).

Informant 4 emphasized the importance of peaceful due process as a cornerstone of justice, affirming that every individual deserves the opportunity to be heard in court. His statement reflects a commitment to fairness, legal dignity, and the constitutional right to due process. As stated,

The peaceful due process that would be all. Everyone should have a day in court (IDI4:SS22)

Informant 10 offered a deeply reflective and candid account of the complex tension between national security and human rights in the Philippine legal context. He acknowledged the existence of laws like the Anti-Terror Law and the earlier National Security Act but questioned their practical enforcement, noting the absence of convictions and the recurring focus on human rights violations. He described the challenge as walking on a tightrope, especially for law enforcers tasked with identifying and prosecuting suspected terrorists without clear operational standards. His account also raised concerns about the tendency of lawmakers to adopt foreign legal models without fully adapting them to local realities. Ultimately, he admitted uncertainty about how to strike the right balance, emphasizing the difficulty of defining guiding principles in this area. As stated,

It's hard to answer this question. There is already a law like the anti-terror law, but before that the National Security Act tried to address domestic terrorism. I have not seen anyone go to jail because of the violation. It's always about who is the victim of human rights abuse. I'm not sure if the law is enough or how it was enforced. Did we follow every step? It's hard, like walking on a tightrope. How do we balance human rights and national security? Very hard in terms of practicality, like for the police officer or the army. How do we identify the terrorist? What acts should he do? He is suspected as a terrorist. Principles that guide the creation of laws, human rights, and national security, usually our congressmen copy ideas from other countries. Terrorism is not novel in the Philippines, other countries probably have better laws to enforce both human rights and national security. It's always a balance. I don't know that even brings an answer, but it's my answer. It's hard to answer this question. Balance is a tightrope when you walk through it. I don't practice in this area of law, human rights and national security. I have not had a case like this, although I encountered a red tag. It's not really about the anti-terror law, but more on how to answer for the crimes. I don't really have an answer. It's hard to balance or know what the principle should be between balancing these two rights of the state and human rights (IDI10:SS22).

Analysis Of Data

The researchers analyzed the data using Colaizzi's (1978) phenomenological method, as adapted by Moustakas (1994) within the tradition of transcendental phenomenology, applying thematic analysis to identify significant statements, formulate meanings, and develop emergent themes.

The analysis was anchored in the study's theoretical framework, drawing on the Interactionism Theory by George Herbert Mead (1934) and supported by Social Comparison Theory by Leon Festinger (1954) and Cognitive Dissonance Theory by Leon Festinger (1957).

The Interactionism Theory by George Herbert Mead (1934) explains that individuals develop their sense of self through social interactions, emphasizing that the self is not innate but shaped by communication and engagement with others. He distinguished between the "I," representing personal spontaneity, and the "Me," reflecting the internalized expectations of society. Central to his theory is the concept of the Generalized Other, which encompasses society's collective attitudes that individuals adopt to understand themselves and guide their behavior. Through symbols like language and gestures, people construct shared meanings that shape social reality. Overall, Mead's theory highlights that identity and reality are continuously formed and redefined through social interaction.

The Social Comparison Theory by Leon Festinger (1954) suggests that people are naturally driven to evaluate themselves by comparing their abilities, opinions, and traits to others, helping them understand their social standing and reduce uncertainty about their self-worth. He identified two types of comparison: upward comparison, where individuals compare themselves to those who seem superior to inspire self-improvement, and downward comparison, where they compare themselves to those worse off to boost self-esteem. When objective measures are unavailable, people rely on these comparisons especially with those similar to them to

assess their abilities and opinions. This process shapes self-perception, motivation, and social behavior within communities.

The Cognitive Dissonance Theory by Leon Festinger (1957) explains the psychological discomfort people feel when their beliefs conflict with their actions or values, motivating them to restore internal consistency by changing beliefs, justifying behaviors, or altering actions. In legal advocacy, this theory helps explain how lawyers manage ethical and professional conflicts, such as defending laws they personally oppose or facing institutional pressures that challenge their values. Through qualitative studies, researchers can examine how legal professionals cope with such dissonance by reinterpreting legal norms, seeking peer support, or adapting advocacy strategies. Overall, the theory sheds light on the internal processes guiding ethical reasoning and professional integrity in legal practice.

Systemic Corruption and Governance Breakdown. This theme reflects informants' views on the decline of institutional honesty and the widespread acceptance of corruption throughout various government levels. They express strong dissatisfaction with the absence of accountability, decisions driven by political interests, and the weakening of democratic protections. These systemic issues hinder meaningful reform, erode public confidence, and allow ongoing impunity to persist within Philippine governance.

This theme is best explained by Conflict Theory (Marx, 1971), which interprets systemic corruption and governance breakdown as consequences of persistent power imbalances and the concentration of authority among political and economic elites. From this theoretical perspective, corruption is not merely an outcome of individual ethical failure but a structural issue rooted in the unequal distribution of power and resources. The informants' accounts of politicized decision-making, lack of accountability, and weakened democratic safeguards illustrate how those in power manipulate institutions to maintain their privilege and control. Conflict Theory thus clarifies how these systemic imbalances erode institutional integrity, foster public distrust, and obstruct genuine reform within Philippine governance.

Miller (2024) highlighted corruption as one of the most significant threats to global peace and security in the 21st century. It undermines accountable governance, diverts much-needed state resources, and is often a driver of violent conflict. In some contexts, corruption has become systemic, defining both the political system and everyday life for citizens. Lee (2025) states that corrupt systems are complex and multifaceted, involving various actors and mechanisms that facilitate illicit activities. At its core, corruption involves the abuse of power for personal gain, which can manifest in different forms such as bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, and cronyism. Symali et al. (2023) tackled corruption as a complex social, economic and political phenomenon, which exists in all countries. The structural characteristics of corruption differ between countries. The deeper roots of corruption depend on the individual conditions of each country, whereas they can be detected in bureaucratic tradition, economic development and social history, among others.

Rule of Law and Institutional Integrity. This theme emphasizes informants' critical views on the weakening and inconsistent enforcement of legal standards in the Philippines, pointing to issues like selective law enforcement, politicized institutions, and fragile checks and balances. Their insights show how these compromised legal structures and unreliable accountability measures weaken democratic values, disrupt the delivery of public services, and erode public trust in the justice system.

This theme is best explained by Structural Functionalism Durkheim (1893), which views social institutions as interdependent components that work together to maintain societal stability and order. From this perspective, the weakening and inconsistent enforcement of legal standards in the Philippines signify a dysfunction within the legal and political systems. The informants' observations of selective law enforcement, politicized institutions, and fragile accountability mechanisms illustrate how institutional breakdown disrupts social equilibrium and erodes public confidence. Structural Functionalism helps clarify how the erosion of the rule of law not only undermines democratic governance but also weakens the moral and structural foundations necessary for societal cohesion and effective governance.

Palombella (2024) examines the rule of law as an institutional ideal, exploring its historical constants and contemporary relevance. It argues that the rule of law must not only concern legal compliance but rather the

adequacy of legal institutions to prevent domination and uphold justice. Kantorowicz & González-Bustamante (2024) states that the rule of law is a foundational concept of state governance, admired for its ideals but also subject to significant controversy, particularly concerning its precise definition. Kirby (2022) tackled that it is common to speak of the ‘integrity’ of such institutions: in popular discourse, legal decisions, law and regulations, and also increasingly, political theory, and proximate disciplines. The integrity of our institutions, at least, needs to be preserved, supported, and defended; against money, politics, power, and populists.

Perception of legal advocates in its role in addressing current national issues

Lawyers as Reformers and Policy Influencers. This theme focuses on how lawyers use their expertise, public trust, and institutional connections to influence national conversations, confront systemic injustices, and shape policy-making. Informants highlight how legal advocates skillfully navigate complex legal and political landscapes by employing litigation, public education, and legislative efforts to foster accountability, safeguard civil rights, and drive structural reforms addressing critical national challenges.

This theme is best explained by Interactionism Theory (Mead, 1934), which emphasizes how individuals construct meaning, identity, and social roles through interaction and communication. From this perspective, lawyers’ roles as reformers and policy influencers are shaped through their engagement with legal institutions, policymakers, and the public. The informants’ descriptions of advocacy, public education, and legislative participation reflect how legal professionals actively define their identities and societal functions through these interactions. Interactionism Theory thus clarifies how lawyers use their professional and social relationships to influence discourse, promote accountability, and advance reforms that respond to national issues.

Nchaga (2025) examines the critical role of advocacy in driving legal reform, with an emphasis on communication tactics that enhance the effectiveness of advocacy efforts. It begins by tracing the historical context of legal advocacy and the rise of organized reform movements. World Litigation Forum (2024) states that the role of lawyers in promoting social justice is multifaceted and indispensable. Through social justice law, pro bono work, community legal services, and advocacy, lawyers can effectuate meaningful change in their communities and beyond. Global Law Today (2025) highlights that lawyers are not only interpreters of existing rules; they are critical actors in creating, influencing, and refining the laws that govern society. Their impact spans every branch of government and reaches into civil society, business, academia, and global organizations.

Legal Advocacy as Public Education and Empowerment. This theme highlights how legal advocates play an active role in public education, community engagement, and rights awareness campaigns by simplifying complex legal ideas for diverse audiences. Informants stress how lawyers adapt their communication approaches, outreach strategies, and collaborations with institutions to empower citizens, enhance legal understanding, and encourage participatory governance amid changing national issues.

This theme is best explained by Interactionism Theory (Mead, 1934), which highlights how meaning and social roles are constructed through communication and interaction. Legal advocates’ efforts to simplify legal concepts and engage with diverse communities demonstrate how they actively shape social understanding and empower citizens through dialogue and shared meaning. Informants’ emphasis on adapting communication styles and forming partnerships reflects the dynamic process by which lawyers foster legal literacy and promote participatory governance amid evolving national challenges.

Balan (2025) explores the critical role of law schools in advancing Public Legal Education (PLE) and the unique contributions of law students in fostering a more legally literate society. By examining the impact of law students as ‘Street Law’ teachers, the article highlights how these programmes not only benefit communities through increased legal awareness but also enhance students’ practical skills and legal consciousness. Meintjes (2025) emphasizes as legal systems worldwide face crises of legitimacy and accessibility, legal empowerment offers a promising path forward. By fundamentally rethinking power relationships within legal processes, this approach addresses root causes of injustice while building more inclusive and responsive legal institutions. Onifade et al., (2024) highlights access to quality education remains a fundamental challenge for underprivileged children worldwide, constrained by socioeconomic disparities, systemic inequities, and gaps in legislative and policy

frameworks. This paper examines the critical role of legal advocacy in addressing these barriers, proposing strategic frameworks and policy solutions to ensure equitable educational opportunities.

Views of the legal community on the effectiveness of existing laws and policies related to national issues

Enforcement Gaps and Governance Challenges. This theme highlights legal professionals' views on the gap between well-designed laws and their uneven enforcement, pointing to problems like bureaucratic inefficiency, poor coordination among agencies, and political interference. Informants stress that these enforcement weaknesses undermine the effectiveness of legal systems and fuel public disappointment in institutional accountability.

This theme is best explained by Structural Functionalism (Durkheim, 1893), which views society as a system where institutions must work cohesively to maintain stability and order. The informants' concerns about enforcement gaps, bureaucratic inefficiency, and political interference illustrate dysfunctions in the legal and governance structures. These breakdowns weaken institutional effectiveness and public trust, highlighting how the failure of institutional components to perform their roles disrupts the overall social equilibrium and accountability mechanisms.

Andarge and Lichtenberg (2020) examined how regulatory agencies face enforcement gaps when they lack complete knowledge of regulated entities. They found that weak enforcement capacity leads to delayed compliance and strategic avoidance by firms, undermining governance credibility. Atlantic Council (2026) examines political volatility in the Philippines, noting that economic growth has not translated into predictable public services or stable protections of rights. It identifies governance challenges such as weak political parties, personalized coalitions, and inconsistent accountability. Human Rights Watch (2026) highlights that Philippines documents ongoing governance challenges, including extrajudicial killings, harassment of activists, and weak accountability for government security forces. Despite assurances of reform, enforcement gaps remain evident as perpetrators of abuses are rarely prosecuted. This study underscores how governance failures and lack of enforcement perpetuate systemic human rights violations.

Political Will and Civic Engagement as Drivers of Legal Effectiveness. This theme highlights legal professionals' understanding of the vital role that strong political leadership and engaged citizenry play in turning legal mandates into effective actions. Informants explain how persistent advocacy, community organizing, and ethical governance enhance the power of laws, enabling policy objectives to be realized as concrete reforms despite the country's complex challenges.

This theme is best explained by Resource Mobilization Theory (McCarthy & Zald, 1977), which highlights how successful social change depends on the effective organization and mobilization of resources such as political leadership, community activism, and ethical governance. Informants' emphasis on sustained advocacy, grassroots organizing, and principled leadership reflects how these factors work together to transform legal mandates into meaningful reforms. This theory helps explain how political will and civic engagement serve as critical drivers that enable laws to be implemented effectively despite complex national challenges.

EPRA Journals (2024) emphasizes that civic engagement is crucial for shaping public policy and strengthening the citizen-government relationship. It argues that active participation enhances democratic accountability, promotes transparent governance, and improves the effectiveness of legal frameworks. World Bank Group (2025) emphasizes that citizen engagement is a critical driver of transparency, accountability, and effective governance. It shows that civic participation strengthens institutions by holding leaders accountable, while political will ensures that reforms are implemented consistently. Askali (2025) explored community perceptions of political will in governance. Findings revealed that citizens view consistent political commitment and integrity as essential for building trust and ensuring effective policy outcomes. The study highlights that without genuine political will, even well-designed laws fail to achieve their intended impact.

Legal community's assessment of the government's adherence to the rule of law in handling national issues

Selective Enforcement and Politicization of Legal Processes. This theme highlights legal professionals' critical observations of inconsistent law enforcement and the politicization of legal institutions, emphasizing how enforcement actions are frequently shaped by power struggles, political agendas, and selective targeting. Informants explain that these practices undermine the rule of law, weaken judicial independence, and diminish public trust in the fairness of legal processes.

This theme is best explained by Conflict Theory (Marx, 1971), which examines how social and legal institutions are influenced by power dynamics and serve the interests of dominant groups. The informants' accounts of selective enforcement and politicization reveal how law enforcement and legal processes are manipulated to maintain existing power structures, resulting in unequal application of laws. Conflict Theory helps clarify how these practices erode judicial independence, distort the rule of law, and reduce public confidence in the justice system's fairness.

Marshall (2020) examines how civil rights laws are selectively enforced against religious communities. He argues that enforcement decisions are often politicized, disproportionately targeting disfavored groups while overlooking similar violations by others. Kotecha (2020) contends that the ICC's selective prosecution undermines perceptions of legitimacy and procedural justice. By prioritizing cases against leaders of weaker states while avoiding politically sensitive prosecutions of powerful nations, the ICC illustrates how enforcement decisions are politicized. Mazvazva and Shadreck (2025) analysis reveals that global financial inequality shapes enforcement priorities, with powerful states exerting disproportionate influence. This politicization distorts enforcement mechanisms, reinforcing systemic inequality and demonstrating how law can be leveraged as a tool of power rather than impartial justice.

Oversight, Transparency, and Accountability Mechanisms. This theme explores legal professionals' evaluation of the effectiveness and shortcomings of institutional safeguards meant to protect the rule of law, focusing on independent oversight agencies, transparency through open data, and citizen monitoring efforts. Informants highlight that strengthening these mechanisms via reforms, active civic participation, and cooperation among government branches is crucial for rebuilding trust, preventing abuse, and ensuring that the government follows legal and ethical guidelines.

This theme is best explained by Structural Functionalism (Durkheim, 1893), which views institutional safeguards such as oversight bodies, transparency measures, and citizen monitoring as essential components that maintain the stability and integrity of the legal system. Informants' emphasis on strengthening these mechanisms through reforms and civic engagement illustrates how the proper functioning and cooperation of institutional parts are necessary to rebuild public trust, prevent abuses of power, and ensure adherence to legal and ethical standards. Structural Functionalism helps clarify the importance of these mechanisms in preserving the rule of law and social cohesion.

Castillo and Gabriel (2020) emphasize that transparency involves allowing both internal and external stakeholders to access and scrutinize government operations. Accountability, in turn, ensures that officials are answerable for their actions, creating a continuum of oversight that strengthens democratic institutions. Lee & Ospina (2022) develops a framework for evaluating accountability in collaborative governance networks. It highlights that oversight and accountability mechanisms must adapt to complex, multi-actor environments, where traditional hierarchical models are insufficient. Makangaa et al., (2025) provide empirical evidence from Uganda, showing how oversight mechanisms such as forensic audits and institutional monitoring improve accountability in public institutions. Their findings stress that oversight must be proactive and continuous to prevent corruption and inefficiency.

Effects of the national issues in the practice of law and legal profession in the country

Ethical Integrity and Professional Responsibility. This theme highlights how legal practitioners face ethical challenges amid national issues and reaffirm their dedication to professional responsibility while navigating pressures from political influences, client demands, and institutional limitations. Informants explain how lawyers

adjust their ethical principles, advocacy approaches, and decision-making to uphold justice, maintain trust, and protect the integrity of the legal profession despite systemic obstacles.

This theme is best explained by Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1957), which describes how individuals cope with the discomfort that arises from conflicting beliefs and behaviors. Legal practitioners' experiences of ethical challenges and pressures from political, client, and institutional demands illustrate this internal tension. Informants' accounts of adjusting their ethical frameworks and advocacy strategies reflect efforts to resolve dissonance by reaffirming professional responsibility, preserving trust, and maintaining the integrity of the legal profession amid systemic challenges.

Xu et al., (2024) highlights that legal ethics provide a comprehensive framework for lawyers to maintain professionalism, integrity, and competence. Integrity requires honesty and transparency, while competence demands continuous learning to navigate evolving legal landscapes. Lawyers must act in their clients' best interests and uphold the integrity of the legal system. Johanssen (2025) highlights the role of ethics in ensuring fairness, impartiality, and effectiveness in alternative dispute resolution (ADR). The article defines key concepts such as professional integrity, ethical standards, and conduct, and explores ethical frameworks for practitioners, including mediators, arbitrators, negotiators, and conciliators. Jorovlea (2025) seeks to examine the multifaceted factors that shape ethical culture within the legal profession, exploring how organizational culture, peer interactions, and personal integrity interweave to influence ethical behavior among legal practitioners.

Adaptation, Innovation, and Resilience in Legal Practice. This theme highlights how legal professionals adapt to changing national circumstances by adopting flexible strategies, leveraging technology, and using interdisciplinary methods to transform traditional practices and stay effective. Informants stress that resilience, ongoing learning, and creative problem-solving empower lawyers to address new challenges, improve access to justice, and maintain their roles within a fast-changing legal and socio-political environment.

This theme is best explained by Resilience Theory (Holling, 1973), which examines how individuals and systems adapt to change, absorb shocks, and transform to maintain functionality in complex environments. The informants' descriptions of legal professionals employing adaptive strategies, leveraging technology, and engaging in continuous learning illustrate how resilience and innovation enable the legal profession to respond effectively to evolving national challenges. This theory highlights the importance of flexibility and creative problem-solving in sustaining access to justice and professional relevance amid socio-political shifts.

Obumneme-Okafor (2025) states that change is the only constant in life. Every other thing is a variable. Even life itself changes. Life starts from the cradle to the grave and each phase comes with its behavioural, physical, emotional, physiological and sociological changes. Li (2023) study ventures into uncharted territory by envisioning a dynamic framework for recalibrating academic majors, deftly orchestrated through a harmonious collaboration among educational institutions, governmental agencies, corporate entities, and international partners within the knowledge-driven economy. Adaman (2024) examines the legal pathways for climate resilience through an analysis of adaptation laws and policies in areas most affected by climate impacts. Employing a comparative legal framework, the research explores existing legislative measures, regulatory frameworks, and policy initiatives aimed at fostering climate adaptation.

Perspectives of the legal community on the balance between human rights and national security in policy-making

Balancing Rights and Security as a Legal Imperative. This theme highlights how legal professionals manage the delicate balance between protecting national security and preserving fundamental human rights, constantly adjusting their legal reasoning, advocacy efforts, and policy involvement to ensure that security measures do not compromise civil liberties. Informants stress the need for principled legal frameworks and inclusive conversations to develop policies that effectively address threats while safeguarding democratic principles.

This theme is best explained by Interactionism Theory (Mead, 1934), which focuses on how individuals negotiate meanings and social roles through ongoing interaction. Legal professionals' efforts to balance national security and human rights reflect this continuous process of interpretation and adjustment in legal reasoning and

advocacy. Informants' emphasis on principled frameworks and inclusive dialogue illustrates how these interactions shape policies that protect civil liberties while responding to security threats, maintaining democratic values through collaborative meaning-making.

Antwi (2024) highlights the global struggle to balance national security imperatives with the protection of individual freedoms has intensified, reflecting a broader constitutional challenge facing both democratic and authoritarian regimes. Nshimiyimana (2025) explores the delicate balance between ensuring cybersecurity and protecting individual rights, emphasizing the responsibility of states to address these challenges. The study examines legal frameworks and policies governing cybersecurity and fundamental freedoms using comparative legal methods. Fasiku & Okwute (2024) states that the ethical scope surrounding the relationship between individual liberty and the security need of the state is complex. Fundamental to this ethical discourse on individual liberty and state security need is the principle of human dignity.

Rule of Law and Due Process as Safeguards. This theme emphasizes legal professionals' strong support for the rule of law and due process as essential protections against potential abuses in security-focused policymaking. They highlight the importance of transparency, judicial oversight, and rights-based checks to uphold these safeguards. Informants explain how these measures are adjusted to preserve institutional integrity, protect vulnerable groups, and ensure that national actions align with constitutional and international legal principles.

This theme is best explained by Structural Functionalism (Durkheim, 1893), which underscores the importance of legal institutions and procedural safeguards in preserving social stability and justice. The informants' emphasis on transparency, judicial oversight, and rights-based checks reflects how these mechanisms function to uphold the rule of law and due process, protecting institutional integrity and vulnerable populations. This theory highlights how adapting these safeguards ensures that national security measures comply with constitutional and international standards, maintaining societal balance and trust.

Pitt (2025) states the regime ended in large part due to court findings of unlawfulness grounded in rule of law principles: including requirements as to clarity in law and procedural fairness. However, the courts did not displace earlier findings that such detention was a permitted exception to the fundamental right to liberty. Rostamzad & Aghakhanlou (2025) highlights the reconstruction of legal and political order in transitional societies is a fundamental necessity for achieving justice, restoring legal legitimacy, and rebuilding public trust. Leslie et al., (2021) examines how the fundamental rights and freedoms that are already codified in international human rights law can be used as the basis for such a legal framework. The purpose of this primer is to introduce the main concepts and principles presented in the CAHAI's Feasibility Study for a general, non-technical audience.

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter presents the summary of the study and the relevant findings that were drawn out from it. This also presents the implications that find practical applicability for the institution to practice the implementation of this program and for future studies.

Summary

This study explored the justice at the breaking point: legal advocates' critical reflections on the Philippines' most contentious issues in San Fernando, Cebu.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the perspectives of the informants on major national issues in the Philippines?
2. How does the legal community perceive its role in addressing current national issues?
3. What are the prevailing views of the legal community on the effectiveness of existing laws and policies related to national issues?

How does the legal community assess the government's

4. adherence to the rule of law in handling national issues?
5. How have recent national issues affected the practice of law and legal profession in the country?
6. What are the perspective of the legal community on the balance between human rights and national security in policy-making?

The research utilized a qualitative research design, specifically using transcendental phenomenology, to explore and understand the perspectives and lived experiences of legal advocates on major national issues in the Philippines. This research was conducted in San Fernando, a municipality in Cebu, Philippines, located in the Central Visayas region. The informants for this study were the legal advocates from San Fernando, Cebu, Philippines, who are willing to share their insights on major national issues. A total of 10 informants with at least one year as legal advocate were interviewed one-on-one to gain a deeper understanding of their perspectives on legal matters affecting the country. In gathering of data, the researchers' utilized self-made-panel approached interview guide consisting of six parts. It was collected and analyzed.

We employed a semi-structured interview guide as the primary research instrument. In gathering of data, the researchers utilized self-made-panel approached interview guide consisting of the following parts; part 1, perspectives of the informants on major national issues in the Philippines; part 2, legal community perceive its role in addressing current national issues; part 3, prevailing views of the legal community on the effectiveness of existing laws and policies related to national issues; part 4, legal community assess the government's adherence to the rule of law in handling national issues; part 5, recent national issues affected the practice of law and legal profession in the country; part 6, perspective of the legal community on the balance between human rights and national security in policy-making. The researchers arranged interviews with the informants, explained the matters of confidentiality, prepared consent forms, and ensured that open-ended questions were asked during the interviews.

FINDINGS

From the gathered data, through the recorded response of the ten (10) informants, twelve (12) substantial emergent themes were created. These themes formulated are as follows:

For the perspectives of the informant on the major national issues in the Philippines, the themes generated were: *Systemic Corruption and Governance Breakdown* and *Rule of Law and Institutional Integrity*.

For the perception of legal advocates in its role in addressing current national issues, the themes generated were: *Lawyers as Reformers and Policy Influencers* and *Legal Advocacy as Public Education and Empowerment*.

For the views of the legal community on the effectiveness of existing laws and policies related to national issues, the themes generated were: *Enforcement Gaps and Governance Challenges* and *Political Will and Civic Engagement as Drivers of Legal Effectiveness*.

For the legal community's assessment of the government's adherence to the rule of law in handling national issues, the themes generated were: *Selective Enforcement and Politicization of Legal Processes* and *Oversight, Transparency, and Accountability Mechanisms*.

For the effects of the national issues in the practice of law and legal profession in the country, the themes generated were: *Ethical Integrity and Professional Responsibility* and *Adaptation, Innovation, and Resilience in Legal Practice*.

For the perspectives of the legal community on the balance between human rights and national security in policy-making, the themes generated were: *Balancing Rights and Security as a Legal Imperative* and *Rule of Law and Due Process as Safeguards*.

Implications

Through the findings of my study, the following recommendations and suggestions may find useful:

The findings of this study reveals that legal advocates in the Philippines serve as vital ethical anchors in national discourse, offering principled perspectives on constitutional integrity, human rights, and governance. Their lived experiences highlight a disconnect between legal frameworks and public understanding, underscoring the need for stronger legal literacy and inclusive civic education. It is recommended that legal advocates be formally involved in policy consultations to ensure rights- based approaches, and that law schools promote qualitative research methods to capture the human impact of legal issues. Future efforts should include establishing a national legal advocacy network, developing case- based training modules, and mentoring youth to foster civic engagement and legal awareness.

Implications for Practice

For the Legal Advocates and Practitioners, lawyers, judges, and other legal workers can learn from this study because it shares different views about national issues. It can help them improve how they handle cases and make sure justice and fairness are upheld.

Government and Policymakers, lawmakers and government officials can use the results of this study to create better laws and policies. It can guide them in making fair decisions that help the people.

Educational Institutions and Law Students, schools, law students, and teachers can better understand real-life legal problems through this study. It helps improve learning and prepares students for future work in law and government.

Civil Society and Advocacy Groups, groups that support human rights and social change can use this study to strengthen their causes. It gives them helpful legal ideas to support their campaigns.

General Public, ordinary citizens can learn more about important national issues through this study. It raises awareness and helps people take part in discussions about justice and government.

Media and Journalists, reporters and writers can use this study to better understand legal and national issues. It helps them share correct and clear information with the public.

Business and Private Sector, business owners and company leaders can learn about laws that affect their work, employees, and management. The study helps them follow the law and make better business choices.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), organizations working on social and environmental issues can use this study to support their projects. It gives them useful legal ideas to push for change.

International Organizations and Legal Scholars, international groups and researchers can use this study to understand how the legal system works in the Philippines. It also helps in comparing laws between countries.

Academe, teachers and researchers in schools can use this study to improve lessons and research about law and government. It can also guide classroom discussions.

Community, local communities can benefit by learning more about their rights and national issues. The study encourages people to be active and involved in their community.

Researchers, people studying law and government can use this study to learn about current legal issues and how policies work. It gives helpful information for further research.

Future Researchers, future students and researchers can use this study as a guide for their own work. It helps them continue studying and improving laws and policies.

Implications for Future Studies

Recommend the following topics for future studies

Grassroots Legal Advocacy and Public Perception in Philippine Barangays. This study would explore how legal advocacy is practiced and perceived at the community level, especially in rural or underserved barangays. It's relevant because our current research focuses on national issues from the perspective of legal advocates, and this follow-up would examine how those perspectives translate into local action and public understanding. It would help bridge the gap between national legal discourse and everyday civic engagement.

Phenomenological Study on the Role of Legal Education in Shaping Advocacy Among Filipino Law Students. This research would investigate how law students develop their advocacy mindset through lived experiences in legal education. It's helpful because it traces the roots of legal advocacy and examines how future legal professionals are influenced by curriculum, mentorship, and exposure to national issues. It complements our study by

focusing on the formation of legal perspectives before professional practice.

Legal Narratives and Human Rights Discourse in Philippine Media: A Qualitative Analysis. This study would analyze how legal advocates' narratives are represented or misrepresented in mainstream and social media when discussing national issues like red-tagging, constitutional reform, or human rights violations. It's relevant because our study highlights the ethical and legal depth of advocates' perspectives, and this follow-up would assess how those views are communicated to the public. It's helpful for improving media literacy and advocacy strategies.

Together, building on the findings of this study, future research may explore related areas that deepen and expand the understanding of legal advocacy in the Philippine context. A study entitled "Grassroots Legal Advocacy and Public Perception in Philippine Barangays" would be relevant in examining how national legal perspectives are translated and received at the community level, helping bridge the gap between formal legal discourse and everyday civic engagement. Another valuable direction is "Phenomenological Study on the Role of Legal Education in Shaping Advocacy Among Filipino Law Students," which would shed light on how legal consciousness and advocacy skills are formed during academic training, offering insights into the development of future legal advocates. Lastly, "Legal Narratives and Human Rights Discourse in Philippine Media: A Qualitative Analysis" would be helpful in assessing how legal perspectives are represented in mainstream and social media, providing a critical lens on public communication and its impact on legal awareness and advocacy strategies. These studies would complement and extend the current research by addressing its implications across education, community engagement, and media representation.

APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis entitled **JUSTICE AT THE BREAKING POINT: LEGAL ADVOCATES' CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE PHILIPPINES' MOST CONTENTIOUS ISSUES** prepared and submitted by **Jian Liegh G. Cansancio, John Anthony M. Pasilan, and Juanito P. Lataza Jr.** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **Bachelor of Science in Criminology** has been examined and is recommended for acceptance and approval for Oral Examination.

THESIS COMMITTEE

ATTY.

DODELON

F.

SABIJON

Adviser

MR. MARCIAL CHIU

MS.

MONIQUE

MONTOLO

Member

Member

ATTY. Chairman	DODELON	F.	SABIJON
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PANEL OF EXAMINERS

Approved by Committee on Oral Examination with a grade of **PASSED**.

ATTY. Adviser	DODELON	F.	SABIJON
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MR. MARCIAL CHIU

MS. Member	MONIQUE		MONTOLO
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Member

ATTY. Chairman	DODELON	F.	SABIJON
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Accepted and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Science in Criminology.

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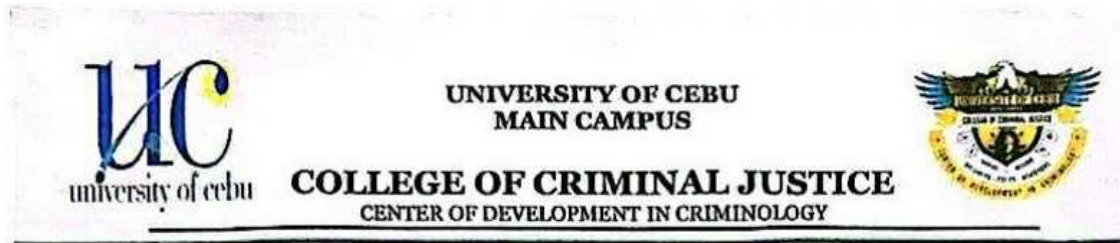
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APPENDIX A

TRANSMITTAL LETTER



JULY 16, 2025

ATTY. JANDY P. CODERA
LAW OFFICE
San Fernando, Cebu (Poblacion South)

Dear Atty. Codera:

Greetings

The undersigned researchers are undertaking a research entitled "PERSPECTIVE OF THE LEGAL ADVOCATES ON MAJOR NATIONAL ISSUES IN THE PHILIPPINES" as a partial requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Science in Criminology. One major purpose of this research is to understand the opinions and views of legal advocates about important issues happening in our country. The informants of this study are the legal advocates who live or work in San Fernando, Cebu.

This study will be beneficial to the legal community, academic institutions, and policymakers since the research will present suggestions and recommendations to improve (enhance) the legal system and its responsiveness to national concerns.

In this regard, we respectfully request from your good office to allow us to conduct an interview with legal advocates within your jurisdiction or institution. We assure you that the identity of the informants will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

We are hoping for your kind approval. Thank you very much.

Very respectfully yours,

JIAN LIEGH G. CANSANCIO

JOHN ANTHONY M. PASILAN

JUANITO P. LATAZA JR.

Noted by:

ATTY. DODELON F. SABIJON, RCrim, Ph.D Crim
Adviser /Dean, College of Criminal Justice

Received: **29 JUL 2025**

DANIELA ALINGALAN

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

University of Cebu Research Office
(032) 255 – 7777 local 183

Informed Consent for the study on JUSTICE AT THE BREAKING POINT: LEGAL ADVOCATES' CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE PHILIPPINES' MOST CONTENTIOUS ISSUES

Name of Principal Investigator : Jian Liegh G. Cansancio

Name of Organization :
University of Cebu

Name of Proposal :
JUSTICE AT THE BREAKING POINT: LEGAL ADVOCATES' CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE PHILIPPINES' MOST CONTENTIOUS ISSUES

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

The researcher is from the University of Cebu – Main Campus presently enrolled in Degree of Bachelor of Science in Criminology and conducting qualitative research entitled **JUSTICE AT THE BREAKING POINT: LEGAL ADVOCATES' CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE PHILIPPINES' MOST CONTENTIOUS ISSUES**. The researcher is asking for your permission and invites you to be part of this research. You did not have to decide that day whether or not you would participate in this research. Before you decide, you can talk to anyone you feel comfortable with about the research.

This consent form may contain words that you do not understand. Please ask me to stop as we go through the information, and I will take the time to explain. If you have questions later, you can contact and ask me.

Purpose of the research

To provide an in-depth study about the justice at the breaking point: legal advocates' critical reflections on the Philippines' most contentious issues including the informants' perspectives, perceiving its role in addressing current national issues, the effectiveness of existing laws and policies related to national issues, assess the government's adherence to the rule of law, affecting the practice of law and legal profession, and balance between human rights and national security in policy-making.

Type of Research Intervention

The research involves individual in-depth interviews with (10) informants, primarily conducted face-to-face; however, depending on the circumstances, the researcher had the option to use online platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, or Video Call, which lasted about forty (40) minutes to one (1) hour. To keep the identities of the informants confidential, the researcher only used voice recordings, and if an online platform was used, participants could turn off their video before the interview started.

Participant selection

The researcher selected ten (10) legal advocates from San Fernando, Cebu, as the primary informants in this study, and all ten informants were subjected to individual in-depth interviews.

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. And if you agree to participate, that will be my gratitude.

Procedures and Protocol

In this investigation, you will be asked to answer the questions during the individual in-depth interview to be conducted by the field interviewers during your free and convenient time. The questions in the interview guide will be read aloud by the interviewer and you can answer 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 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 a copy of the transcript and audio recording, which will be destroyed after 6 months.

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

Duration

The duration of the research is three (3) months. During the data collection phase, the field interviewers will request ten (10) informants for an appointment for an individual in-depth interview at your convenient time and place. The interview will last for forty (40) minutes to one (1) hour. Your engagement as a participant will only take place once.

Risks

During the individual in-depth interview, the field interviewers asked you about your perspectives, perceiving its role in addressing current national issues, the effectiveness of existing laws and policies related to national issues, assess the government's adherence to the rule of law, affecting the practice of law and legal profession, and balance between human rights and national security in policy-making on major national issues. You will not be forced nor required to answer all questions that will be asked. If you do not want 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 interview. Furthermore, be assured that the responses that you will provide will not be shared.

Benefits

There were no immediate and direct benefits to you. However, your responses to this research greatly helped the researcher.

Reimbursements

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

Confidentiality

All the data and responses that you will provide in this investigation will not be shared with 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 interviewers and the researchers 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 interviewers/researchers 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 given to anyone except the research proponents. All related documents regarding the research will be kept in UC main research office and only the research director has the key or access to all of the files. After the research is completed/published, it will be destroyed after six (6) months.

Sharing the Results

At the end of the study, I will be sharing the results with the academic community. Be assured that your answers during the individual in-depth interview will be shared with anybody.

The results will also be presented in a research conference/colloquium and will be published so that other interested people may learn from this research.

All records will be kept confidential. All the names of the informants will not be divulged. Furthermore, as an informant, you may also share the results and a copy of the report will be provided by the researcher. If you have a plan to do so, please include the timeline and reason for sharing the information, including the details.

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 participating in the individual in-depth interview at any time.

Who to Contact

If you have any questions, you can ask them now. You can also ask questions even after the study has started. If you wish to ask questions later, you may contact any of the following:

Jian Liegh G. Cansancio (Lead Researcher) - 09282119844

John Anthony M. Pasilan (Researcher) - 09634930360

Juanito P.

Lataza	Jr.	(Researcher)	-	09611937144
				Atty.
Dodelon	Sabijon	Ph.D.	CRIM.-	email add: delon.ucgs@gmail.com
				Dr. Renato
Sagayno	-	09212297427	-	UC Main Research Director
				Dr. Juanito

N. Zuasula Jr., MD. – 233-5503 (UC CAREC)

This research project has been reviewed and scrutinized by the technical panel of the University of Cebu College of Criminal Justice and the UC research office. If you have any questions, please contact the University of Cebu at 032-255-7777.

PART II: Certificate of Consent

I have read the foregoing, or it has been read to me. I've had the opportunity to ask questions about it, and any inquiries I've asked have been addressed satisfactory. 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). Illiterate participants should include their thumbprints 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 informants 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. individual in-depth interview
2. record the proceeding of the interview
3. manually record other responses/answers during the interview

I confirm that the participant was allowed 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

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

University of Cebu Research Office
(032) 255 – 7777 local 183

Informed Consent for the study on JUSTICE AT THE BREAKING POINT: LEGAL ADVOCATES' CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE PHILIPPINES' MOST CONTENTIOUS ISSUES

Name of Principal Investigator : Jian Liegh G. Cansancio

Name of Organization
University of Cebu

Name of Proposal
JUSTICE AT THE BREAKING POINT: LEGAL ADVOCATES' CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE PHILIPPINES' MOST CONTENTIOUS ISSUES

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

Ang nagtuon gikan sa University of Cebu – Main Campus og kasamtangang naenroll sa degree nga Bachelor of Science in Criminology og nagabuhat og qualitative nga pagtuon nga anaay titulo nga, **JUSTICE AT THE BREAKING POINT: LEGAL ADVOCATES' CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE PHILIPPINES' MOST CONTENTIOUS ISSUES**. Ang nagtuon nangayo sa imong pagtugot og giimbitar ka nga mahimong parte ani nga pagtuon. Dili ka kinahanglan mudesidir karon kung ganahan ba ka or dili nga muapil aning pagtuon. Usa ka mudesidir, pwede ka makaistorya sa bisan kinsa nga paminaw nimo komportable ka kabahin sa pagtuon.

Kini nga consent form posible nga naay mga pulong nga wala nimo nasabtan. Palihog pangotana nako aron muhunong ta samtang atong tarongon ang impormasyon, og gamiton nako ang takna aron sa pagpasabot. Og naa kay pangotana unya, pwede ko nimo kontakon og mangotana.

Purpose of the research

Aron makahatag ug lalom nga pagtuon bahin sa panglantaw sa mga legal nga tigpasiugda sa dagkong nasudnong isyu sa Pilipinas lakip ang mga perspektibo sa mga impormante, pag-ila sa papel niini sa pagtubag sa kasamtangang nasudnong mga isyu, ang pagka-epektibo sa kasamtangang mga balaod ug polisiya nga may kalabutan sa nasudnong mga isyu, pagtimbang-timbang sa pagsunod sa gobyerno sa lagda sa balaod, pag-apektar sa praktis sa balaod ug legal nga propesyon, ug balanse tali sa tawhanong katungod ug nasudnong seguridad sa paghimo og polisiya.

Type of Research Intervention

Kini nga pagtuon naglakip sa napulo ka mga informante, napuo ka mga informante para sa binagsa nga interbyu nga pagahimoon pinaagi sa face-to-face apan depende sa protocol nga itakna sa gobyerno, ang nagtuon naay opsyon nga mugamit og online nga plataporma sama sa Zoom, Google Meet, or Video Call nga mulungtad sa

kwarenta minutos hantod usa ka oras. Aron matago ang identity sa mga informante, ang nagtuon mugamit og voice recording, og kung ang gigamit kay online nga plataporma, pwede nila palongon ang ilang bidyo usa magsugod ang interbyu.

Participant selection

Ako nag imbitar og napulo ka mga legal advocates gikan sa San Fernando, Cebu, isip mga nag una nga impormante ani nga pagtuon, ug ang tanang napulo ka mga impormante gipailalom sa indibidwal nga lawom nga mga interbyu.

Voluntary Participation

Ang imong partisipasyon ani nga pagtuon kay entaryong boluntaryo. Naa sad kay katungod og kagawasan nga usbon ang imong desisyon unya og muhunong sa pag apil bisan pa og niuyon ka nga muapil kaganiha og dili kini gamiton kontra nimo. Og kung ikaw muoyon sap ag apil, kana ako mapasalamaton.

Procedures and Protocol

Sa kini nga imbestigasyon, ikaw agdahon sa pagtubag sa mga pangotana inig binagsa na interbyu nga pagabuhaton sa field interviewers sa imong bakante og komportable nga oras. Ang mga pangotana sa interbyu guide kay basahon og kusog sa interbyuwer og pwede nimo matubag ang mga items nga ganahan nimo tubagon. Kung dili nimo gusto nga tubagon ang bisan unsang mga pangutana sa panahon sa interbyu, mahimo nimong isulti ug ang tig-interbyu nga mopadayon sa sunod nga pangutana. Ang impormasyon nga narekord kay konfidensyal, ug walay lain nga maka-access sa impormasyon kundi ang mga field interbyuwers og ang nagtuon lamang. Ang kopya sa transcript og audio recording gub-on human sa unom ka bulan.

Aron masiguro nga makakuha og puno nga pagsabot sa hinungdan ani nga pagtuon, ang nagtuon magpasabot usa sa mga tumong sa pagtuon og ang intended nga benepisyo sa pag apil ani nga imbestigasyon.

Duration

Kini nga pagtuon mukabat og tulo ka bulan. Diha sa bahin sa pagkuha sa mga datos, ang mga field interbyuwers murequest og napulo ka informante para sa ipaagi sa individual in dept-interview sa inyong takna og lugar nga gusto. Ang interbyu mulungtad og kwarenta minutos hantod sa usa ka oras. Ang imong pag apil isip partisipante mahitabo lang sa usa ka higayon.

Risks

Inig binagsa nga interbyu, ang mga field interbyuwers mangotana kabahin sa imong perspektibo, pag-ila sa papel niini sa pagtubag sa kasamtangang nasudnong mga isyu, ang pagka-epektibo sa kasamtangang mga balaod ug polisiya nga may kalabutan sa nasudnong mga isyu, pagtimbang-timbang sa pagsunod sa gobyerno sa lagda sa balaod, pag-apektar sa praktis sa balaod ug legal nga propesyon, ug balanse tali sa tawhanong katungod ug nasudnong seguridad sa paghimo og polisiya. Dili ka pugson og dili pod ka pwede agdahon nga tubagon dapat ang tanang ipangotana. Kon dili ka ganahan tubagon ang uban nga items tungod kay dili ka komportable ana, ang imong desisyon pagasabton og dili ka kinahanglan muhatag og rason sa imong wala pagtubag, o pagbalibad nga mamahimong parte sa interbyu. Labaw pa, makasalig ka nga ang imong mga tubag nga ihatag dili kini ipanghatag sa lain.

Benefits

Wala kini ditso ditso og direkta nga benepisyo kanimo. Apan, ang imong tubag ani nga pagtuon makatabang og dako sa nagtuon.

Reimbursements

Dili ka matagaan og bisan unsa nga bayad o ganti nga kwarta kung ikaw mahimong parte ani nga pagtuon.

Confidentiality

Ang tanang datos og mga tubag nga imong ipagawas ani nga imbestigasyon dili ihatag sa laing tawo og magpabilin nga konfidensyal. Ang imong impormasyon og lain pang impormasyon nga makuha ani nga pagtuon kay tagoan og walay bisan usa kundi ang filed interbyuwers og ang nagtuon lamang ang makalantaw niini. Ang mga impormasyon kabahin nimo anaay numero o code og dili ang imong ngalan. Ang mga field interbyuwers o researchers lamang ang makabalo sa imong number o code. Ang tanang dokumento subay ani nga imbestigasyon ibutang sa kabinet nga naay lock og yawi og dili kini ihatag o ipakatap kundi sa nagtuon laman. Ang mga dokumento nga susama sa gitun-an kay tagoan sa UC main research office og ang research director lamang ang naay yawi og access sa tanang files. Inig human sa pagtuon, kini gub-on human sa unom ka bulan.

Sharing the Results

Inig human sa pagtuon, ako ipakita ang resulta sa academic community. Makasalig ka nga ang imong mga tubag sa interbyu ipakita sa uban.

Ang mga resulta ipresentar usab sa usa ka research conference o colloquium og ipublish aron ang mga tawo nga naay interest makat-on kabahin ani nga pagtuon.

Ang tanang record konfidensyal. Ang tanang mga ngalan dili ipagawas. Labaw pa, isip informante, pwede pod nimo iapod apod ang resulta og kopya sa report nga ihatag sa nagtuon. Kung naa kay plano nga buhaton kini, palihog og apil sa timeline og rason sa pag apod apod sa impormasyon, lakip na ang mga detalye.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

Mamahimo ka nga muapil o dili ani nga pagtuon. Kini pod usa ka nag unang importansya nga ikaw dapat makabalo nga mamahimo kang dili muapil sa interbyu sa bisan unsang taknaa.

Who to Contact

Kung ikaw naay mga pangotana, pwede naka mangotana karon dayun. Pwede pod ka mangotana misig nahuman na pagsugod sa pagtuon. Kung ikaw gusto mangotana taod taod, pwede nimo kontakon ang mga musunod.

G.	Cansancio	(Lead	Researcher)	-	Jian Liegh
Anthony	M.	Pasilan	(Researcher)	-	09282119844
Lataza	Jr.	(Researcher)	-	John	09634930360
Dodelon	Sabijon	Ph.D.	CRIM.-	email	Juanito P.
Sagayno	-	09212297427	-	UC	09611937144
				add:	Atty.
					delon.ucgs@gmail.com
					Dr. Renato
					Director
					Dr. Juanito

N. Zuasula Jr., MD. – 233-5503 (UC CAREC)

Kini nga proyekto sa pagtuon girebyu og gituki tuki sa teknikal panel sa University of Cebu Graduate School og sa UC research office. Kung naa kay mga pangotana, palihog kontaka ang University of Cebu sa ilang landline, 032-255-7777.

PART II: Certificate of Consent

I have read the foregoing, or it has been read to me. I've had the opportunity to ask questions about it, and any inquiries I've asked have been addressed satisfactory. I consent voluntarily to participate in this research.

Print Name of Participant _____
Signature of Participant _____
Date _____

Day/Month/Year
If Illiterate

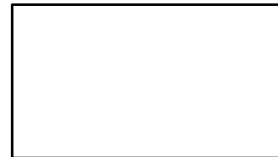
A literate witness must sign (If possible, this person should be selected by the participant and should have no connection to the research team). Illiterate participants should include their thumbprints as well.

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 informants 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. individual in-depth interview
2. record the proceeding of the interview
3. manually record other responses/answers during the interview

I confirm that the participant was allowed 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

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE

University of Cebu Research Office

(032) 255-7777 local 183

Instruction:

The purpose of this study is to explore justice at the breaking point: legal advocates' critical reflections on the Philippines' most contentious issues in San Fernando, Cebu on major national issues in the Philippines. This will be accomplished through an individual in-depth interview (IDI) within 60-90 minutes. Rest assured that the information that you give will be regarded with utmost confidentiality.

Preliminary Questions

Name (Optional) :

Address (Optional) :

How long have you been practicing law?

(Unsa na ka dugay nagpraktis ka og abogasiya?)

What is your current role and area of legal practice??

(Unsa ang imong papel karon og espesyalisasyon sa balaod?)

What motivated you to pursue a career in the legal profession?

(Unsa ang nagtukmod kanimo sa pagpadayon sa usa ka karera sa legal nga propesyon?)

Part I. Perspectives of the informants on the major national issues in the Philippines.

What are your thoughts on the most pressing national issues currently facing the Philippines?

(Unsa ang inyong mga hunahuna sa labing dakong mga isyu nga giatubang sa Pilipinas karon?)

How do you personally view issues such as human rights violations, extrajudicial killings, corruption, political dynasties, and territorial disputes like the West Philippine Sea?

(Unsay imong personal nga paglantaw sa mga isyu sama sa paglapas sa tawhanong katungod, extrajudicial killings, korapsyon, political dynasties, ug territorial dispute sama sa West Philippine Sea?)

How do you think these issues have impacted Philippine society and its legal system?

(Unsa sa imong hunahuna ang epekto niini nga mga isyu sa katilingban sa Pilipinas ug sa legal nga sistema niini?)

How do you think these issues have evolved over time?

(Sa imong tan-aw, giunsa pag-uswag o pag-usab sa mga isyung kini sa paglabay sa panahon?)

Part II. Perception of legal advocates in its role in addressing current national issues.

How would you describe the role of legal advocates in addressing national issues?

(Giunsa nimo paghulagway sa papel sa mga legal nga tigpanalipod sa pag-atubang sa mga nasudnong isyu?)

What motivates legal advocates to engage with these issues?

(Unsa ang nagdasig sa mga legal nga tigpanalipod sa ilang pag-apil sa mga isyung kini?)

How do legal advocates influence public discourse and policy?

(Giunsa sa mga abogado pag-impluwensya ang pampublikong diskurso ug mga polisiya?)

What do you think are the limitations and strengths of legal advocacy in the Philippines?

(Unsa ang imong tan-aw nga mga kalig-on ug limitasyon sa legal nga adbokasiya sa Pilipinas?)

Part III. Views of the legal community on the effectiveness of existing laws and policies related to national issues.

How effective do you think the current laws and policies are in

addressing these major issues?

(Sa imong tan-aw, unsa ka epektibo ang kasamtangang mga balaod ug polisiya sa pag-atubang sa mga dagkong isyu?)

What aspects of the legal or policy framework do you believe need improvement or reform?

(Unsa nga aspeto sa legal o polisiya nga balangkas ang kinahanglan pa og pagpaayo o reporma?)

What factors contribute to the success or failure of these laws?

(Unsa ang mga hinungdan nga nagdala sa kalampusan o kapakyasan sa mga balaod?)

How do you think the legal system responds to emerging national challenges?

(Unsa sa imong hunahuna ang tubag sa legal nga sistema sa mga mitumaw nga nasudnong mga hagit?)

Part IV. Legal community's assessment of the government's adherence to the rule of law in handling national issues.

How would you evaluate the government's commitment to the rule of law in dealing with national issues?

(Unsaon nimo pagtimbang-timbang ang pasalig sa gobyerno sa pagmando sa balaod sa pag-atubang sa nasudnong mga isyu?)

What examples come to mind when thinking about the government's compliance or non-compliance with legal standards?

(Unsa nga mga ehemplo ang imong nahinumduman nga nagpakita sa pagtuman o paglapas sa gobyerno sa legal nga mga pamantayan?)

How does the legal community respond when the rule of law is perceived to be undermined?

(Giunsa pagtubag sa legal nga komunidad kung ang pagmando sa balaod gitan-aw nga gidaot?)

What mechanisms do you believe are effective in ensuring government accountability?

(Unsa nga mga mekanismo ang imong gituohan nga epektibo sa pagsiguro sa tulubagon sa gobyerno?)

Part V. Effects of the national issues in the practice of law and legal profession in the country.

How have current national issues influenced your practice as a legal professional?

(Sa unsang paagi ang kasamtangang nasudnong mga isyu nakaimpluwensya sa imong praktis isip legal nga propesyonal?)

How do these issues shape the ethical responsibilities of legal practitioners?

(Giunsa paghulma sa mga isyung kini sa etikal nga responsibilidad sa mga legal nga practitioner?)

In what ways has the legal profession adapted to these changes?

(Sa unsang paagi nga ang legal nga propesyon mipahiangay niini nga mga kausaban?)

Part VI. Perspectives of the legal community on the balance between human rights and national security in policy – making.

How do you view the relationship between human rights and national security in policymaking?

(Giunsa nimo pagtan-aw ang relasyon tali sa tawhanong katungod ug seguridad sa nasud sa paghimo og palisiya?)

What challenges arise when trying to balance these two priorities?

(Unsang mga hagit ang motungha sa dihang mosulay sa pagbalanse niining duha ka prioridad?)

What principles should guide the creation of laws that affect both human rights and national security?

(Unsang mga prinsipyo ang kinahanglang mogiya sa pagmugna ug mga balaod nga makaapektar sa tawhanong katungod ug nasudnong seguridad?)

Parting Statement:

Thank you for your participation in this interview for the accomplishment of this research. All the answers that have been given will be transcribed. If you wish to have a copy of the results, please don't hesitate to ask the researcher. Thank you and God Bless.

VALIDATION FORM

UNIVERSITY OF CEBU- MAIN COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

VALIDATION SHEET FOR INTERVIEW GUIDE

Name of the Researcher Jian Liegh G. Cansancio
John Anthony M. Pasilan
Juanito P. Lataza Jr.

Title of Research PERSPECTIVES OF LEGAL ADVOCATES ON MAJOR NATIONAL ISSUES IN THE PHILIPPINES
Name of the Evaluator Joan Marie A. Oville
Signature of Evaluator [Signature] Date Evaluated 7-10-2025

RATING: Number of YES marks

(☒) 10 Very Good () 6-7 Fair
() 8-9 Good () 0-5 For Revalidation

To the Evaluator: Kindly check the column which fits your evaluation of the item

ITEMS	YES	NO
Ethics:		
1. Introduction (purpose, confidentiality, duration, way of conduct) and closing components (for additional comments) are provided	☒	
2. Informed consent is included	☒	
Artistry:		
3. Script is included/ built in, so interviewer can introduce, guide and conclude the interview in a consistent manner	☒	
4. Questions are appropriate to the study, enhancing the possibility of storytelling and narratives	☒	
Rigor:		
5. Questions are open-ended to encourage in-depth responses: avoiding close-ended questions which are answerable by yes or no	☒	
6. Questions are stated in the affirmative	☒	
7. Probe questions are provided	☒	
8. Questions are logically ordered asking the highest priority questions first. Opinion questions follow information questions	☒	
9. Questions are stated in clear and simple terms	☒	
10. Number of questions can be covered within 60 to 90 minutes. Not exceeding 15 open-ended items (probes excluded), for every research question, except for special cases	☒	

REMARKS:

APPENDIX D

SAMPLE VERIFICATION FORM OF TRANSCRIPTION

Informant :
Participant 1
Session No. : One (1)
Date/s :
6, September 2025
Time Started : 9:45 PM
Time Ended : 10:10 PM
Duration : 25 minutes
Location : San Cebu
Interviewed by : Fernando, Jian M.
Liegh G. Cansancio and John Anthony
Transcribed by : Pasilan
Lataza : Juanito P.
Reviewed by : Atty.
Dodelon F. Sabijon, PhD Crim

QUESTIONS	RESPONSES
Part I - Preliminary Questions	
1. How long have you been practicing law?	I have been practicing law since 2011. So, more or less, I am now more than 14 years, almost 15 years in the practice of law.
2. What is your current role and area of legal practice?	Actually, I practice law on all kinds of legal litigation. Except, I don't accept drug cases. I do not accept drug cases since the start of my practice. And we accept labor cases, criminal cases, civil cases. In the area of criminal case, I do not accept drug cases.
3. What motivated you to pursue a career in the legal profession?	Actually, it was my childhood dream to become a lawyer.
Part II - Perspectives of the informants on the major national issues in the Philippines	

1. What are your thoughts on the most pressing national issues currently facing the Philippines?	With the current issues now which is the flood control, I believe our government's officials are corrupt. Although not all but some are corrupt and they just siphon our tax and money. In regards with the west Philippine sea, we have legal rights or the claim because we have historical facts that the area claim by the Chinese government are part during Spanish time. And in regards to the extrajudicial killings, I believe it's a principle that life is value. Persons always and have been, should be given a dignity and that is why I don't advocate extrajudicial killings because it deprived of the person's due process.
2. How do you personally view issues such as human rights violations, extrajudicial killings, corruption, political dynasties, and territorial disputes like the West Philippine Sea?	With the current situations we have now, I believe our government did a little thing to uplift us with corruption and political dynasties. However, in territorial disputes there is a change from our stands of not giving, our stance previously in previous administration that they did not make an effort to claim our territorial rights. However, as this administration now at least they are now trying to claim our territorial rights over the west Philippine seas. In extrajudicial killings also, I am glad that our current administration's has shifted from the killings of drug related cases extrajudicially has been stopped and they did not advocate that because as I said earlier, the life of every person is valuable, it has to be with due process. In human rights violation, in my practice I was able to see a person's whose rights had been violated in which it was able to reach to the court and that's what we practicing lawyers are alarmed because there are still human rights violations that still happening at this time.
3. How do you think these issues have impacted Philippine society and its legal system?	In the impact of a Philippine society, the members of the society which persons who have lesser means or a persons who have lesser in life are the most vulnerable in regard to these issues. Because as I see it, only the rich people can obtain justice and the people who have lesser in life usually will be the one to be convicted of other crimes that will be charged against them. Because the rich people have the means to obtain good lawyers and I believe you also are able to see it that there are still corrupt government officials that would accept bribe and these legal systems are still have a long way to have a justice for everyone, even the poor.
4. How do you think these issues have evolved over time?	I believe these issues should be addressed through its evolutions by means of a proper education for the young children and it has to be become part of the curriculum in educating the children. And they will be the one to make our society a good place to live in.
Part III - Perception of legal advocates in its role in addressing current national issues	
1. How would you describe the role of legal advocates in addressing national issues?	We, the legal advocates, would practice our professions as mandated by our oath and we do not have the choice of selecting and accepting individuals except for civil cases. But in criminal cases, it's our oath to accept persons charged with criminal offense unless it violates our health.

2. What motivates legal advocates to engage with these issues?	I believe with these issues the legal advocates will likely to engage for the purpose of having a good and clean society.
3. How do legal advocates influence public discourse and policy?	We, legal advocates, usually become part of any legislative structures because we have more knowledge on laws and that is why we could influence good laws for the society.
4. What do you think are the limitations and strengths of legal advocacy in the Philippines?	Well, the legal limitations and strength of legal advocacy in the Philippines is that there are many killings now of lawyers, in fact, one of my friend lawyer was shot while he was driving after hearing in Cebu City Hall of Justice. So they were thinking that we lawyers are engaged in the business of our clients which is not and did not happen because we lawyers are only advocates and defend our clients and we did not participate in the business of our clients.
Part IV - Views of the legal community on the effectiveness of existing laws and policies related to national issues	
1. How effective do you think the current laws and policies are in addressing these major issues?	I believe the current laws and policies are effective enough only the people who are implementing the laws and policies. The people who are implementing it are not effective and they are not enforcing it.
2. What aspects of the legal or policy framework do you believe need improvement or reform?	In my own point of view as practicing lawyer and before I became a lawyer, I was employed in a bank and as I see it, in my own opinion the root of corruption is the one legislated by our legislators which is the bank secrecy law. So, if that bank secrecy law is a little bit eased up, meaning the government offices or officials could disclose the deposits of the taxpayers or the depositors or the government officials, maybe that would be the time that the corruptions will be out in our society. And we could make an effort to make our taxpayer pay because that is the root of all corruptions and tax evasion because the taxpayers can evade because the government cannot look into the money of the taxpayers and the government officials who are corrupt or are hiding their money in the banks and the government agencies enforcing for corruptions could not and do not have any ability to see the deposits of the corrupt officials.
3. What factors contribute to the success or failure of these laws?	The factors that affect for the success or failure of this laws are the interests of the government officials. So, they put their personal interest first before the national interests.
4. How do you think the legal system responds to emerging national challenges?	The legal system is very important to the emerging national challenges because it is in the legal system that justice could be served and it is in the legal system that we will be free from any corruptions, and if the corruptions will be eliminated then everything will follow, like poverty and everything, educations.
Part V - Legal community's assessment of the government's adherence to the rule of	

law in handling national issues	
1. How would you evaluate the government's commitment to the rule of law in dealing with national issues?	Our government right now, in its commitment to the rule of law in dealing with the national issues. I did not see it that they were putting the national interest in its commitment to achieve so that the rule of law will prevail. So, the government's commitment to the rule of law is not yet totally fulfilled that the rule of law will prevail.
2. What examples come to mind when thinking about the government's compliance or non-compliance with legal standards?	The example of it is the current issue which is the flood control. Our government officials did not make an effort to commit in finding out that the projects was able to finish and that makes our government lose of money.
3. How does the legal community respond when the rule of law is perceived to be undermined?	We, the legal community, would make and should make an effort to elevate the practices which could undermine our society and the practice of law and we make an effort to let the rule of law prevail.
4. What mechanisms do you believe are effective in ensuring government accountability?	Actually, our laws are enough to make our government officials accountable for their acts. However, we have government officials who put their personal interests first before the national interests. So, that would make our laws ineffective.
Part VI - Effects of the national issues in the practice of law and legal profession in the country	
1. How have current national issues influenced your practice as a legal professional?	Actually, the current national issues could influence our practice of law because economically it could affect us. The people who will engage us has no economic means to pay us. So, if our current national issues would continue then our economic conditions will not be becoming good, then definitely our practice of law will be affected and we in the future could have a lesser and lesser clients to come.
2. How do these issues shape the ethical responsibilities of legal practitioners?	We, lawyers who are engaged in the practice of law are ethically bound to follow the ethical rules and standards set for us to adhere. I did not see, maybe some few were able to violate it but that's not the prevailing cases. So, most of the lawyers follow ethically on the standards set up on us.
3. In what ways has the legal profession adapted to these changes?	We lawyers are resilient enough if the changes that may affect us and that could make us change our status and conditions in life, our needs. So, definitely we have to adapt whatever changes will come to us.
Part VII - Perspectives of the legal community on the balance between human rights and national security in policy-making	
1. How do you view the relationship between human rights and national security in	I believe human rights and national security are interchangeably related because the national security would always end up for the

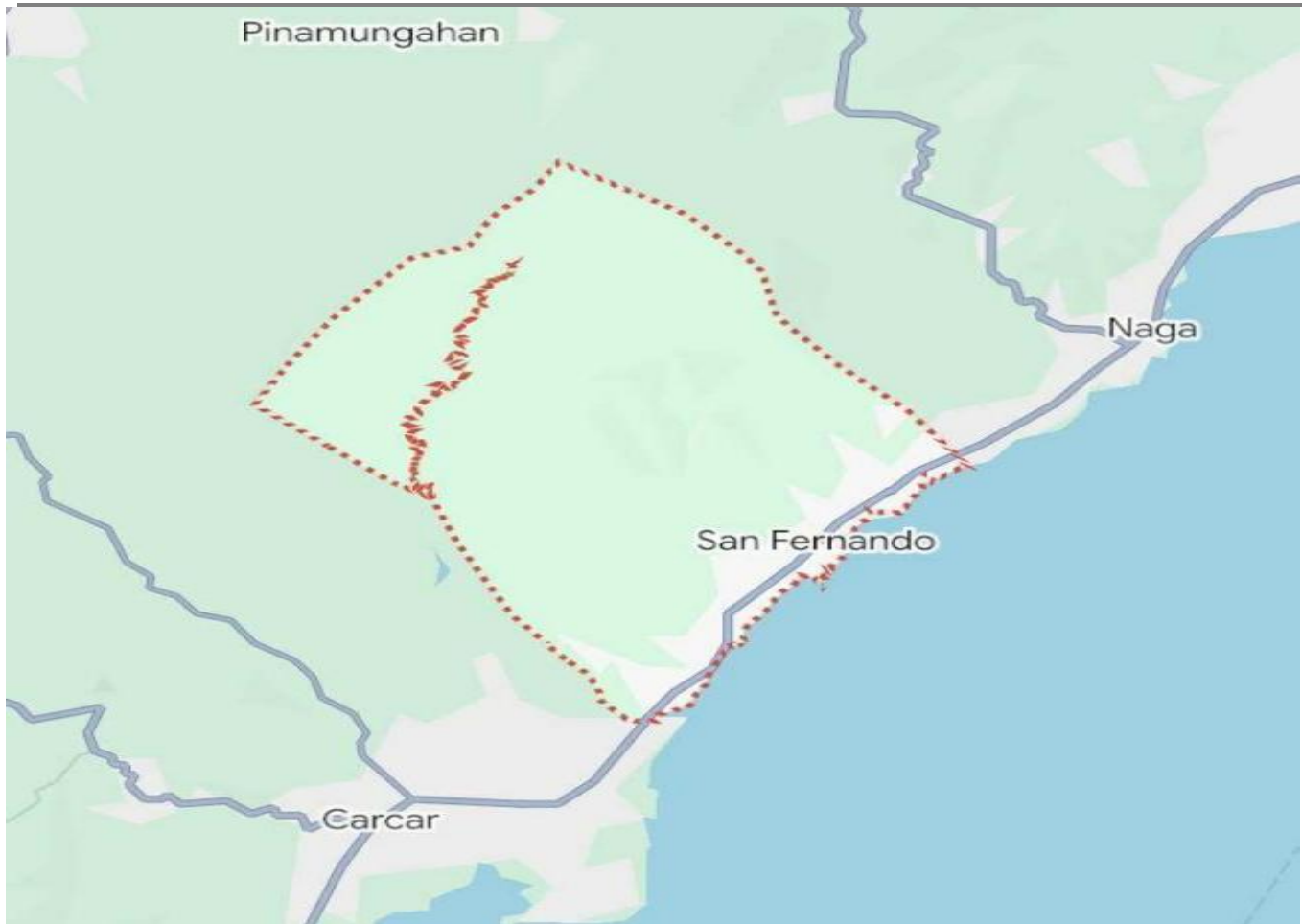
polycymaking?	good of Filipino people so the national security must always be in line with the human rights.
2. hat challenges arise when trying to balance these two priorities?	In trying to balance these two priorities it must be that the national security must prevail.
3. hat principles should guide the creation of laws that affect both human rights and national security?	The principle that should guide in the creation of laws that affect both human rights and national security should always be for the good of Filipino people. So, if it is good for the Filipino then that should be the guide.

APPENDIX E

Location Map

San Fernando, Cebu, Philippines





APPENDIX F



University of Cebu
Research Ethics Committee



PROTOCOL APPROVAL

Form 2.7

August 12, 2025

Protocol Version Approved: One (1)
ICF Version Approved: One (1)

JIAN LIEGH G. CANSANCIO
University of Cebu
Main Campus

Re: **BSCRIM(1)-2025-07-010.**

**PERSPECTIVE OF LEGAL
ADVOCATES ON MAJOR NATIONAL
ISSUES IN THE PHILIPPINES**

We wish to inform you that your study protocol under (expedited/full board review), is hereby granted approval for implementation by the UCREC. This ethical clearance is valid for one year from August 12, 2025 until expiration date August 12, 2026.

Investigator Responsibilities after Approval:

- Submit document amendments for REC approval before implementing them
- Submit RNE's reports to the REC within 14 days
- Submit progress report every 12 months
- Submit final report after completion of protocol procedures at the study site
- Report protocol deviation/ violation
- Comply with all relevant international and national guidelines and regulations
- Abide by the principles of good clinical practice and ethical research
- Apply for continuing review if conduct of study will last more than 1 year.
- Be prepared for a site visit by members of the UCAREC.
- Submit Continuing Review before expiration of approval

Very truly yours,

DR. JUANITO N. ZUASULA, JR. MD
Chair, UCREC

APPENDIX G

SAMPLE GUIDE SIGNIFICANT STATEMENTS

SIGNIFICANT STATEMENT NUMBER	SIGNIFICANT STATEMENTS	INFORMANT NUMBER
1	With the current issues now which is the flood control, I believe our government's officials are corrupt. Although not all but some are corrupt and they just siphon our tax and money. In regards with the west Philippine sea, we have legal rights or the claim because we have historical facts that the area claim by the Chinese government are part during Spanish time. And in regards to the extrajudicial killings, I believe it's a principle that life is value. Persons always and have been, should be given a dignity and that is why I don't advocate extrajudicial killings because it deprived of the person's due process. I1:SS1	I1
2	With the current situations we have now, I believe our government did a little thing to uplift us with corruption and political dynasties. However, in territorial disputes there is a change from our stands of not giving, our stance previously in previous administration that they did not make an effort to claim our territorial rights. However, as this administration now at least they are now trying to claim our territorial rights over the west Philippine seas. In extrajudicial killings also, I am glad that our current administration's has shifted from the killings of drug related cases extrajudicially has been stopped and they did not advocate that because as I said earlier, the life of every person is valuable, it has to be with due process. In human rights violation, in my practice I was able to see a person's whose rights had been violated in which it was able to reach to the court and that's what we practicing lawyers are alarmed because there are still human rights violations that still happening at this time. I1:SS2	I1
3	In the impact of a Philippine society, the members of the society which persons who have lesser means or a persons who have lesser in life are the most vulnerable in regard to these issues. Because as I see it, only the rich people can obtain justice and the people who have lesser in life usually will be the one to be convicted of other crimes that will be charged against them. Because the rich people have the means to obtain good lawyers and I believe you also are able to see it that there are still corrupt government officials that would accept bribe and these legal systems are still have a long way to have a justice for everyone, even the poor. I1:SS3	I1
4	I believe these issues should be addressed through its evolutions by means of a proper education for the young children and it has to be become part of the curriculum in	I1

	educating the children. And they will be the one to make our society a good place to live in. I1:SS4	
5	We, the legal advocates, would practice our professions as mandated by our oath and we do not have the choice of selecting and accepting individuals except for civil cases. But in criminal cases, it's our oath to accept persons charged with criminal offense unless it violates our health. I1:SS5	I1
6	I believe with these issues the legal advocates will likely to engage for the purpose of having a good and clean society. I1:SS6	I1
7	We, legal advocates, usually become part of any legislative structures because we have more knowledge on laws and that is why we could influence good laws for the society. I1:SS7	I1
8	Well, the legal limitations and strength of legal advocacy in the Philippines is that there are many killings now of lawyers, in fact, one of my friend lawyer was shot while he was driving after hearing in Cebu City Hall of Justice. So they were thinking that we lawyers are engaged in the business of our clients which is not and did not happen because we lawyers are only advocates and defend our clients and we did not participate in the business of our clients. I1:SS8	I1
9	I believe the current laws and policies are effective enough only the people who are implementing the laws and policies. The people who are implementing it are not effective and they are not enforcing it. I1:SS9	I1
10	In my own point of view as practicing lawyer and before I became a lawyer, I was employed in a bank and as I see it, in my own opinion the root of corruption is the one legislated by our legislators which is the bank secrecy law. So, if that bank secrecy law is a little bit eased up, meaning the government offices or officials could disclose the deposits of the taxpayers or the depositors or the government officials, maybe that would be the time that the corruptions will be out in our society. And we could make an effort to make our taxpayer pay because that is the root of all corruptions and tax evasion because the taxpayers can evade because the government cannot look into the money of the taxpayers and the government officials who are corrupt or are hiding their money in the banks and the government agencies enforcing for corruptions could not and do not have any ability to see the deposits of the corrupt officials. I1:SS10	I1
11	The factors that affect for the success or failure of this laws are the interests of the government officials. So, they put	I1

	their personal interest first before the national interests. I1:SS11	
12	The legal system is very important to the emerging national challenges because it is in the legal system that justice could be served and it is in the legal system that we will be free from any corruptions, and if the corruptions will be eliminated then everything will follow, like poverty and everything, educations. I1:SS12	I1
13	Our government right now, in its commitment to the rule of law in dealing with the national issues. I did not see it that they were putting the national interest in its commitment to achieve so that the rule of law will prevail. So, the government's commitment to the rule of law is not yet totally fulfilled that the rule of law will prevail. I1:SS13	I1
14	The example of it is the current issue which is the flood control. Our government officials did not make an effort to commit in finding out that the projects was able to finish and that makes our government lose of money. I1:SS14	I1
15	We, the legal community, would make and should make an effort to elevate the practices which could undermine our society and the practice of law and we make an effort to let the rule of law prevail. I1:SS15	I1
16	Actually, our laws are enough to make our government officials accountable for their acts. However, we have government officials who put their personal interests first before the national interests. So, that would make our laws ineffective. I1:SS16	I1
17	Actually, the current national issues could influence our practice of law because economically it could affect us. The people who will engage us has no economic means to pay us. So, if our current national issues would continue then our economic conditions will not be becoming good, then definitely our practice of law will be affected and we in the future could have a lesser and lesser clients to come. I1:SS17	I1
18	We, lawyers who are engaged in the practice of law are ethically bound to follow the ethical rules and standards set for us to adhere. I did not see, maybe some few were able to violate it but that's not the prevailing cases. So, most of the lawyers follow ethically on the standards set up on us. I1:SS18	I1
19	We lawyers are resilient enough if the changes that may affect us and that could make us change our status and conditions in life, our needs. So, definitely we have to adapt whatever changes will come to us. I1:SS19	I1
20	I believe human rights and national security are interchangeably related because the national security would	I1

	always end up for the good of Filipino people so the national security must always be in line with the human rights. I1:SS20	
21	In trying to balance these two priorities it must be that the national security must prevail. I1:SS21	I1
22	The principle that should guide in the creation of laws that affect both human rights and national security should always be for the good of Filipino people. So, if it is good for the Filipino then that should be the guide. I1:SS22	I1

APPENDIX G1

SAMPLE FORMULATION OF CORE MEANINGS

I - Perspectives of the informants on the major national issues in the Philippines

SIGNIFICANT STATEMENT	FORMULATED MEANINGS
With the current issues now which is the flood control, I believe our government's officials are corrupt. Although not all but some are corrupt and they just siphon our tax and money. In regards with the west Philippine sea, we have legal rights or the claim because we have historical facts that the area claim by the Chinese government are part during Spanish time. And in regards to the extrajudicial killings, I believe it's a principle that life is value. Persons always and have been, should be given a dignity and that is why I don't advocate extrajudicial killings because it deprived of the person's due process. IDI1:SS1	The informant feels let down by some government officials who misuse our tax money, believes the West Philippine Sea belongs to the Philippines because of its history, and insists that every life matters and deserves a fair legal process, so they do not support killing people without a trial. FM1
With the current situations we have now, I believe our government did a little thing to uplift us with corruption and political dynasties. However, in territorial disputes there is a change from our stands of not giving, our stance previously in previous administration that they did not make an effort to claim our territorial rights. However, as this administration now at least they are now trying to claim our territorial rights over the west Philippine seas. In extrajudicial killings also, I am glad that our current administration's has shifted from the killings of drug related cases extrajudicially has been stopped and they did not advocate that because as I said earlier, the life of every person is valuable, it has to be with due process. In human rights violation, in my practice I was able to see a person's whose rights had been violated in which it was able to reach to the court and that's what we practicing lawyers are alarmed because there are still human rights violations that still happening at this time. IDI1:SS2	The informant feels the current government has only made small steps against corruption and political dynasties but is finally showing effort to protect our rights over the West Philippine Sea. He appreciates that extrajudicial killings of drug suspects have stopped because every life deserves a fair trial. At the same time, he is worried that human rights violations still occur, as they've witnessed cases moving through the courts in their legal practice. FM2

In the impact of a Philippine society, the members of the society which persons who have lesser means or a persons who have lesser in life are the most vulnerable in regard to these issues. Because as I see it, only the rich people can obtain justice and the people who have lesser in life usually will be the one to be convicted of other crimes that will be charged against them. Because the rich people have the means to obtain good lawyers and I believe you also are able to see it that there are still corrupt government officials that would accept bribe and these legal systems are still have a long way to have a justice for everyone, even the poor. IDI1:SS3	The informant sees that in the Philippines, people with little money suffer the most because only the rich can afford good lawyers, while corrupt officials take bribes, so the justice system still fails to protect the poor. FM3
I believe these issues should be addressed through its evolutions by means of a proper education for the young children and it has to be become part of the curriculum in educating the children. And they will be the one to make our society a good place to live in. IDI1:SS4	The informant believes long-term solutions to social problems start with teaching children the right values and information. By making these topics part of their school curriculum, today's students can grow up to build a better society. FM4

II - Perception of legal advocates in its role in addressing current national issues

We, the legal advocates, would practice our professions as mandated by our oath and we do not have the choice of selecting and accepting individuals except for civil cases. But in criminal cases, it's our oath to accept persons charged with criminal offense unless it violates our health. IDI1:SS5	The informant said that the legal advocates feel bound by their oath to represent every criminal defendant without choosing whom to accept, showing their commitment to justice and professional duty, unless a case poses a health risk. FM5
I believe with these issues the legal advocates will likely to engage for the purpose of having a good and clean society. IDI1:SS6	The informant believes that legal advocates will step up to address these problems so our society becomes fairer and more honest. FM6
We, legal advocates, usually become part of any legislative structures because we have more knowledge on laws and that is why we could influence good laws for the society. IDI1:SS7	The informant explained that legal advocates use their deep understanding of the law to join the lawmaking process, so they can help create fair and effective legislation for society. FM7
Well, the legal limitations and strength of legal advocacy in the Philippines is that there are many killings now of lawyers, in fact, one of my friend lawyer was shot while he was driving after hearing in Cebu City Hall of Justice. So they were thinking that we lawyers are engaged in the business of our clients which is not and did not happen because we lawyers are only advocates and defend our	The informant highlights that lawyers in the Philippines face real danger, some have been killed for doing their jobs and people often wrongly think lawyers join their clients' wrongdoing, even though they only defend them. FM8

clients and we did not participate in the business of our clients. IDI1:SS8

III - Views of the legal community on the effectiveness of existing laws and policies related to national issues

I believe the current laws and policies are effective enough only the people who are implementing the laws and policies. The people who are implementing it are not effective and they are not enforcing it. IDI1:SS9	The informant believes current laws and policies are sound, but they fail in practice because the people tasked with enforcing them are ineffective and do not apply them properly. FM9
In my own point of view as practicing lawyer and before I became a lawyer, I was employed in a bank and as I see it, in my own opinion the root of corruption is the one legislated by our legislators which is the bank secrecy law. So, if that bank secrecy law is a little bit eased up, meaning the government offices or officials could disclose the deposits of the taxpayers or the depositors or the government officials, maybe that would be the time that the corruptions will be out in our society. And we could make an effort to make our taxpayer pay because that is the root of all corruptions and tax evasion because the taxpayers can evade because the government cannot look into the money of the taxpayers and the government officials who are corrupt or are hiding their money in the banks and the government agencies enforcing for corruptions could not and do not have any ability to see the deposits of the corrupt officials. IDI1:SS10	The informant believes that strict bank secrecy laws, put in place by legislators, are the root of corruption because they hide the deposits of taxpayers and public officials. If these laws were eased to let government agencies see account information, corrupt practices and tax evasion would be exposed and could be properly addressed. FM10
The factors that affect for the success or failure of this laws are the interests of the government officials. So, they put their personal interest first before the national interests. IDI1:SS11	The informant believes laws succeed or fail based on government officials' personal interests, since they put their own gain ahead of the country's needs. FM11
The legal system is very important to the emerging national challenges because it is in the legal system that justice could be served and it is in the legal system that we will be free from any corruptions, and if the corruptions will be eliminated then everything will follow, like poverty and everything, educations. IDI1:SS12	The informant believes the legal system is key to solving the country's biggest challenges by delivering justice and rooting out corruption, which then allows issues like poverty and education to improve. FM12

Legal community's assessment of the government's adherence to the rule of law in handling national issues

Our government right now, in its commitment to the rule of law in dealing with the national issues. I did not see it that they were putting the national interest in its commitment to achieve so that the rule of law will prevail. So, the government's commitment to the rule of	The informant believes the government talks about upholding the rule of law but doesn't actually put national interest first, so laws aren't fully enforced and challenges remain unresolved. FM13
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law is not yet totally fulfilled that the rule of law will prevail. IDI1:SS13	
The example of it is the current issue which is the flood control. Our government officials did not make an effort to commit in finding out that the projects was able to finish and that makes our government lose of money. IDI1:SS14	The informant believes government officials neglected flood control projects, allowing them to remain unfinished and wasting public funds. FM14
We, the legal community, would make and should make an effort to elevate the practices which could undermine our society and the practice of law and we make an effort to let the rule of law prevail. IDI1:SS15	The informant feels that the legal community must step up to strengthen practices that protect society and the integrity of law, ensuring the rule of law prevails. FM15
Actually, our laws are enough to make our government officials accountable for their acts. However, we have government officials who put their personal interests first before the national interests. So, that would make our laws ineffective. IDI1:SS16	The informant believes that although our laws are designed to hold government officials accountable, those same officials put their personal interests above the nation's needs, which ultimately makes the laws ineffective. FM16

Effects of the national issues in the practice of law and legal profession in the country

Actually, the current national issues could influence our practice of law because economically it could affect us. The people who will engage us has no economic means to pay us. So, if our current national issues would continue then our economic conditions will not be becoming good, then definitely our practice of law will be affected and we in the future could have a lesser and lesser clients to come. IDI1:SS17	The informant believes that ongoing national problems are weakening the economy, so clients won't have the money to pay for legal services, which will lead to fewer clients and threaten the future of legal practice. FM17
We, lawyers who are engaged in the practice of law are ethically bound to follow the ethical rules and standards set for us to adhere. I did not see, maybe some few were able to violate it but that's not the prevailing cases. So, most of the lawyers follow ethically on the standards set up on us. IDI1:SS18	The informant believes that lawyers are bound by clear ethical rules and that, aside from a few exceptions, most practitioners uphold these standards, preserving trust in the profession. FM18
We lawyers are resilient enough if the changes that may affect us and that could make us change our status and conditions in life, our needs. So, definitely we have to adapt whatever changes will come to us. IDI1:SS19	The informant said that lawyers see themselves as strong and able to adjust when shifts in their career, lifestyle, or needs arise, so they're prepared to adapt to any change. FM19

VI - Perspectives of the legal community on the balance between human rights and national security in policy-making

I believe human rights and national security are interchangeably related because the national security would always end up for the good of Filipino people so the national security must always be in line with the human rights. IDI1:SS20	The informant believes that national security and human rights are deeply connected, security efforts should ultimately benefit Filipinos and must always uphold human rights. FM20
In trying to balance these two priorities it must be that the national security must prevail. IDI1:SS21	The informant tackles when human rights and national security come into conflict, protecting the nation's security must take priority. FM21
The principle that should guide in the creation of laws that affect both human rights and national security should always be for the good of Filipino people. So, if it is good for the Filipino then that should be the guide. IDI1:SS22	The informant believes any law balancing human rights and national security must be guided first and foremost by what benefits the Filipino people. FM22

APPENDIX G2

DEVELOPMENT OF CLUSTER THEMES

I - Perspectives of the informants on the major national issues in the Philippines

Formulated Core Meanings	Cluster Themes
The informant feels let down by some government officials who misuse our tax money, believes the West Philippine Sea belongs to the Philippines because of its history, and insists that every life matters and deserves a fair legal process, so they do not support killing people without a trial. FM1	I - Governance, Accountability, and Corruption II - Human Rights, Due Process, and Access to Justice III - National Sovereignty and Territorial Claims IV - Education as Foundation for Social Change
The informant feels the current government has only made small steps against corruption and political dynasties but is finally showing effort to protect our rights over the West Philippine Sea. He appreciates that extrajudicial killings of drug suspects have stopped because every life deserves a fair trial. At the same time, he is worried that human rights violations still occur, as they've witnessed cases moving through the courts in their legal practice. FM2	
The informant sees that in the Philippines, people with little money suffer the most because only the rich can afford good lawyers, while corrupt officials take bribes, so the justice system still fails to protect the poor. FM3	
The informant believes long-term solutions to social problems start with teaching children the right values and information. By making these topics part of their school curriculum, today's students can grow up to build a better society. FM4	

II - Perception of legal advocates in its role in addressing current national issues

The informant said that the legal advocates feel bound by their oath to represent every criminal defendant without choosing whom to accept, showing their commitment to justice and professional duty, unless a case poses a health risk. FM5	I - Ethical Duty and Commitment to Justice II - Law Reform and Policy Engagement III - Risks, Misunderceptions, and Professional Vulnerability
The informant believes that legal advocates will step up to address these problems so our society becomes	

fairer and more honest. FM6	
The informant explained that legal advocates use their deep understanding of the law to join the lawmaking process, so they can help create fair and effective legislation for society. FM7	
The informant highlights that lawyers in the Philippines face real danger, some have been killed for doing their jobs and people often wrongly think lawyers join their clients' wrongdoing, even though they only defend them. FM8	

III - Views of the legal community on the effectiveness of existing laws and policies related to national issues

The informant believes current laws and policies are sound, but they fail in practice because the people tasked with enforcing them are ineffective and do not apply them properly. FM9	I - Enforcement and Governance Challenges II - Structural Legal Barriers to Accountability III - Transformative Potential of the Legal System
The informant believes that strict bank secrecy laws, put in place by legislators, are the root of corruption because they hide the deposits of taxpayers and public officials. If these laws were eased to let government agencies see account information, corrupt practices and tax evasion would be exposed and could be properly addressed. FM10	
The informant believes laws succeed or fail based on government officials' personal interests, since they put their own gain ahead of the country's needs. FM11	
The informant believes the legal system is key to solving the country's biggest challenges by delivering justice and rooting out corruption, which then allows issues like poverty and education to improve. FM12	

Legal community's assessment of the government's adherence to the rule of law in handling national issues

The informant believes the government talks about upholding the rule of law but doesn't actually put national interest first, so laws aren't fully enforced and challenges remain unresolved. FM13	I - Commitment versus Implementation II - Oversight and Accountability in Public Projects III - Legal Community as Protector of the Rule of Law
The informant believes government officials neglected flood control projects, allowing them to remain unfinished and wasting public funds. FM14	
The informant feels that the legal community must step up to strengthen practices that protect society and the integrity of law, ensuring the rule of law prevails. FM15	
The informant believes that although our laws are designed to hold government officials accountable, those same officials put their personal interests above the nation's needs, which ultimately makes the laws ineffective. FM16	

V - Effects of the national issues in the practice of law and legal profession in the country

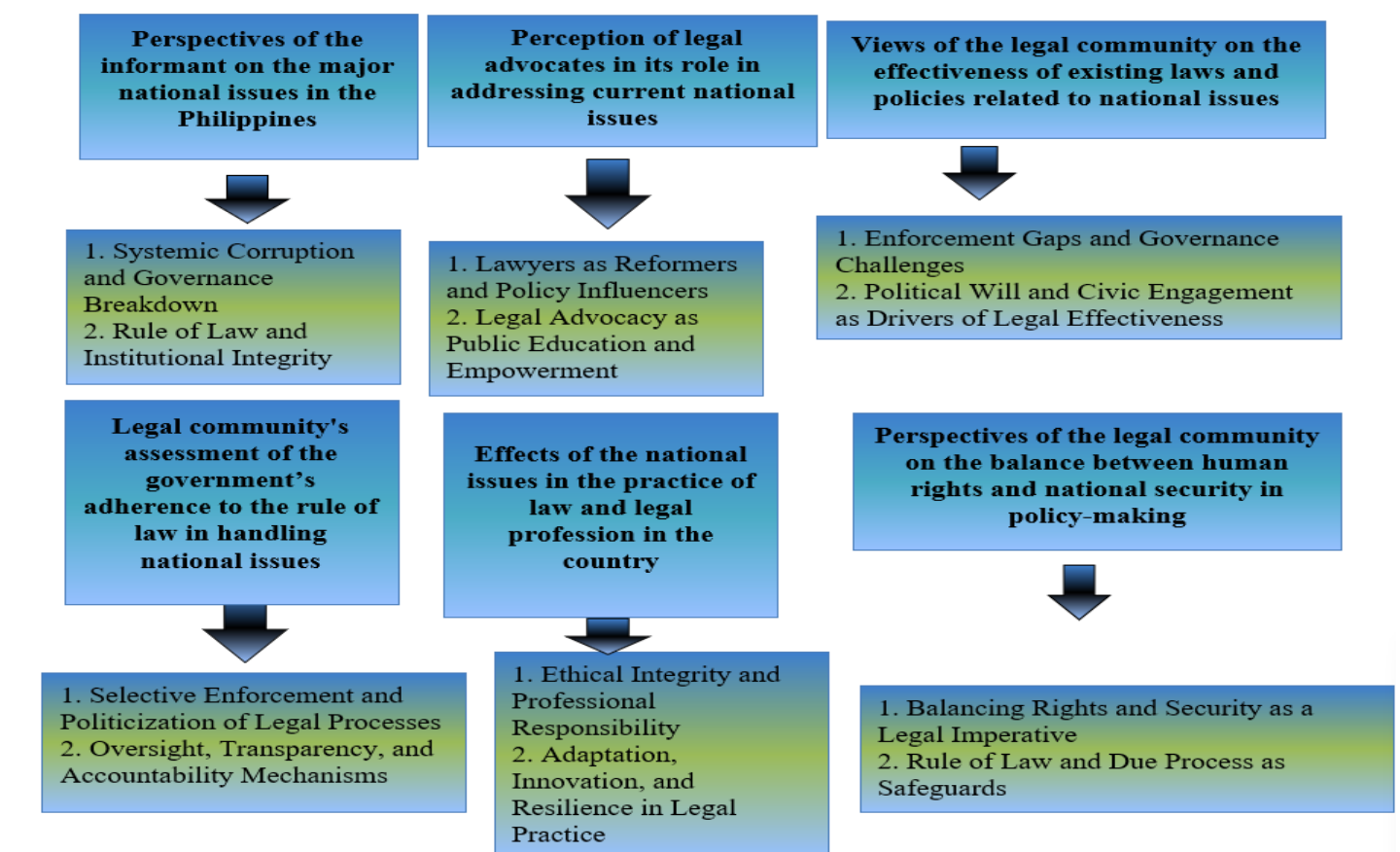
The informant believes that ongoing national problems are weakening the economy, so clients won't have the money to pay for legal services, which will lead to fewer clients and threaten the future of legal practice. FM17	I - Economic Sustainability of Legal Practice II - Ethical Integrity and Professional Trust III - Resilience and Adaptability of Practitioners
The informant believes that lawyers are bound by clear ethical rules and that, aside from a few exceptions, most practitioners uphold these standards, preserving trust in the profession. FM18	
The informant said that lawyers see themselves as strong and able to adjust when shifts in their career, lifestyle, or needs arise, so they're prepared to adapt to any change. FM19	

VI - Perspectives of the legal community on the balance between human rights and national security in policy-making

The informant believes that national security and human rights are deeply connected, security efforts should ultimately benefit Filipinos and must always uphold human rights. FM20	I - Synergy of Rights and Security II - Security Supremacy under Tension III - Public Welfare as the Ultimate Compass
The informant tackles when human rights and national security come into conflict, protecting the nation's security must take priority. FM21	
The informant believes any law balancing human rights and national security must be guided first and foremost by what benefits the Filipino people. FM22	

APPENDIX H

DIAGRAM OF COMMON THEMES



CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL DATA

Name

:JIAN LIEGH G. CANSANCIO

Date of Birth

:June28, 2004

Place of Birth

:

CebuCity

Contact Number

:

09282119844

Email Address

:

lieghcansancio@gmail.com

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

College

:

University of Cebu - Main Campus

Sanciango St., Brgy. Kalubihan, Cebu City

2022-Present

Senior High

:

Don Vicente Rama Memorial National High School

Macopa Street, Basak, Cebu City

2020-2022

Junior High

:

Don Vicente Rama Memorial National High School

Macopa Street, Basak, Cebu City

2016-2020

Elementary

:

Don Vicente Rama Memorial Elementary School

Macopa Street, Basak, Cebu City

2010-

2016

PERSONAL DATA

Name :
JOHN ANTHONY M. PASILAN

Date of Birth :
February 26, 2003

Place of Birth : Cebu

City

Contact Number :
09634930360

Email Address :
johnan2ny7@gmail.com

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

College :
University of Cebu - Main Campus

Sanciangko St., Brgy. Kalubihan, Cebu City

2022-Present

Senior High :
Cebu City Don Carlos A. Gothong Memorial

National High School

Padilla St., Cebu City C.

2020-2022

Junior High :
Cebu City Don Carlos A. Gothong Memorial

National High School

Padilla St., Cebu City C.

2016-2020

Elementary :
Basak Community School

Cabresos St.,Basak San Nicolas, Cebu City

2016

2010-

PERSONAL DATA

Name :
JUANITO P. LATAZA JR.

Date of Birth :
January 14, 2003

Place of Birth : Cebu
City

Contact Number :
09611937144

Email Address :
juanitolatz003@gmail.com

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

College :
University of Cebu - Main Campus

Sanciangko St., Brgy. Kalubihan, Cebu City

2022-Present

Senior High :
University of Cebu - Main Campus SHS Department

6000, J. Alcantara St., Cebu City, 6000 Cebu

2022 2020-

Junior High :
Quiot National High School

Sabellano St., Quiot, Cebu E. City

2020 2016-

Elementary :
Quiot Elementary School

E.



Sabellano

St.,

Quiot,

Cebu

City

2016

2010-