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PROFILES OF INDIVIDUALS CHARGED WITH MURDER

Individuals charged with murder, Personal profile, Social background, Contributing factors,
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Author:

Gelua, Paul Anthony P.
Calpito Jr., Arnel A.
Delodado, Aeron C.
Acacio, Lea A.
Bartolome, Jerome M.
Bolo, Clarkken S.
Gabay, Michael Angelo J.
Galamay, Michael O.
Gagarin, Jayson
Jimenez, Jetrho L.
Monteso, Christian Jay R.
Resurreccion, Gerson A.
Salvador, Kim
Tepase, Jhon Mark S.
Yabes, Vee Jay B.

Co- Author:

Mrs.Princess Apple G. Mamuad

ABSTRACT

This study examined the personal profiles, social backgrounds, and contributing factors associated with individuals charged with murder in Laoag City, Ilocos Norte. Specifically, it aimed to identify the demographic characteristics of the accused in terms of sex, marital status, and educational attainment; describe their social background in relation to occupation, income level, family role, and community involvement; and determine the factors that influenced their alleged involvement in the crime of murder.

The study employed a quantitative descriptive research design. Data were gathered from seventeen individuals facing murder charges who were detained at the Ilocos Norte Provincial Jail and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology in Laoag City. Total enumeration was utilized, and data were collected through a structured questionnaire checklist administered with strict ethical safeguards. The gathered data were analyzed using frequency counts and percentage distributions.

Findings revealed that all respondents were male, predominantly married, and mostly fathers with limited educational attainment. Most were engaged in low-income and unstable occupations and earned ₱15,000 or below monthly, indicating significant socioeconomic disadvantage. Despite community and religious involvement, respondents remained vulnerable to violent incidents. The most commonly reported factors influencing their involvement in murder were self-defense or perceived threat and claims of false accusation, while peer influence and emotional triggers were less frequently cited.

The study concludes that involvement in murder cases is shaped by a complex interaction of personal, economic, and situational factors. The findings underscore the importance of socioeconomic support, legal awareness, and rehabilitation-oriented interventions. An informative video on the elements of murder and its legal penalties was developed to enhance public awareness and promote crime prevention

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND IT'S SETTING

INTRODUCTION

Murder is universally recognized as one of the gravest offenses against human life, carrying profound social, psychological, and moral implications. Defined as the intentional and unlawful killing of another person, often marked by elements such as treachery, evident premeditation, abuse of superior strength, and extreme cruelty, murder disrupts families, threatens community safety, and reflects deeper issues related to violence, conflict, and human behavior. Globally, cases of murder continue to pose significant challenges to justice systems, law enforcement agencies, and researchers who seek to understand why such extreme acts occur despite ongoing efforts to prevent them.

International reports show that murder remains a widespread concern in many regions. Issues such as poverty, political instability, organized crime, and systemic inequality contribute to persistently high rates of violent crime in several countries. In places like El Salvador, South Africa, and Brazil, for instance, homicide rates remain among the highest in the world, illustrating how social conditions and structural problems influence the prevalence of violence (UNODC, 2023). These global patterns highlight that murder cannot be understood solely as an individual act but must also be examined within the broader context of social and environmental pressures.

In the Philippines, murder continues to raise public concern despite overall improvements in national crime statistics. Records from the Philippine National Police (PNP) show that hundreds of murder cases are reported each year, often linked to domestic conflicts, personal disputes, gang activities, and socio-economic struggles. Although some forms of criminality have declined, incidents of murder persist and reflect underlying tensions within families, communities, and society at large. These cases also draw attention to the emotional, psychological, and relational issues that frequently surround acts of extreme violence.

This study aimed to explore and understand the personal profile and social background of individuals facing murder charges along with the factors that influenced the accused involvement in the crime of murder.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Murder remains one of the most severe and socially disruptive crimes in any society. Beyond being a violation of law, it reflects deeper issues related to human behavior, social conditions, and community safety. In the Philippines, murder continues to draw national concern as many communities struggle with socio-economic pressures, family conflicts, substance abuse, and mental health challenges all of which contribute to patterns of violent behavior (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2019). While crime statistics provide numerical data on murder incidents, they do not fully reveal the personal histories, social environments, and lived experiences of individuals accused of taking a life.

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, approximately 437,000 people were victims of murder globally in 2021, translating to a crime rate of 5.4 per 100,000 population. However, these figures varied significantly by region. The Americas, particularly Central and South America, consistently recorded the highest murder rates, exceeding 15 per 100,000 in countries such as El Salvador, Honduras, and Venezuela. These high rates were often linked to gang violence, political instability, and deep-rooted inequality. In contrast, Europe, Oceania, and parts of Asia reported much lower rates, often below 3 per 100,000, reflecting stronger social cohesion, law enforcement, and preventive infrastructure (UNODC, 2019).

Within Southeast Asia, murder rates differed widely across nations. The Philippines, in particular, provided a critical case study. In 2023, over 6,000 murder cases were reported nationwide, resulting in a murder rate of approximately 5.6 per 100,000, slightly above the global average. Although this represented a decrease from previous years marked by aggressive anti-crime policies, the rate remained a significant concern. Notably, higher concentrations of murder cases were reported in densely populated and economically challenged regions such as Metro Manila, Central Luzon, and parts of Mindanao, including the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region. Contributing factors in the Philippine context included poverty, overcrowded urban

environments, unresolved domestic conflicts, inadequate mental health services, and exposure to systemic violence (PNP, 2021).

In the field of criminal justice, understanding murder goes beyond documenting incidents. It involves analyzing the interplay of personal, social, psychological, and environmental factors that shape an offender's behavior. Profiling individuals accused of murder provides insights that help law enforcers improve investigative procedures, correctional institutions design rehabilitation programs, and communities develop preventive strategies. This makes offender profiling and background analysis vital components of modern criminology and criminal justice practice.

While numerous studies have examined murder cases in the Philippines, most have focused on national statistics, crime trends in urban centers, or general criminological theories. However, there is limited research that examines the personal and social profiles of individuals accused of murder in Ilocos Norte, a province with its own cultural, social, and economic conditions. This gap leaves unanswered questions about how local environments, family structures, economic struggles, and psychological factors influence individuals to commit violent crimes. Addressing this gap is crucial to developing context-specific strategies for crime prevention, offender rehabilitation, and community safety in Ilocos Norte.

This study aimed to explore and understand the personal profile and social background of individuals facing murder charges along with the factors that may influence the accused involvement in the crime of murder. By analyzing these factors, the research provided a deeper understanding of the patterns and influences that shaped their behaviors. This approach not only helped describe and summarize their characteristics through quantitative and descriptive methods but also offered meaningful insights that could enhance criminological practices such as improving investigative procedures, offender profiling, and crime prevention strategies. Ultimately, by identifying specific behavioral indicators and social conditions, the study aimed to support law enforcers, criminologists, and future practitioners in developing proactive, data-based approaches to addressing violent crimes in Ilocos Norte.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study focused on identifying the demographic characteristics of the accused/individual facing murder charges in Laoag City, Ilocos Norte. Specifically it answered the following:

1. What is the personal profile of the accused in terms of gender, marital status and educational attainments?
2. What is the social background of the accused in terms of occupation, income level, family rule, community involvement?
3. What are the factors that influenced the involvement of the accused in the crime of murder?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Understanding killing requires different perspectives philosophical, legal, psychological, and sociological. These theories would guide the study in explaining why it occurs in contexts like self-defense, crime, or state punishment.

PSYCHODYNAMIC THEORY

The Psychodynamic Theory, originally proposed by Sigmund Freud, emphasizes the influence of unconscious mental processes and early childhood experiences on human behavior. According to this theory, unresolved inner conflicts particularly those stemming from emotional neglect, trauma, or abuse in childhood can lead to destructive behaviors later in life. Freud's ideas, including the Oedipus complex, suggest that these suppressed emotional experiences may manifest in irrational actions, mental disturbances, or even violent tendencies in adulthood (Bluml, 2021).

The Theory helps explain how internal emotional conflicts and unresolved psychological trauma may play a role in the lives of individuals accused of murder. Profiling the personal history of the accused allows researchers to explore whether early emotional wounds, such as abandonment or unresolved anger, contributed to their aggressive behavior. This supports the

goal of understanding the psychological dimension of those involved in homicide cases, an essential aspect of criminology and offender profiling.

SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY

Social Learning Theory, developed by Albert Bandura, explains that people learn behaviors through observation, imitation, and modeling, especially when such behaviors are reinforced by rewards or lack of punishment. This theory underscores the impact of the environment such as peers, family, media, and community in shaping an individual's behavior. If a person grows up in a setting where violence is normalized, they may come to see aggression as an acceptable response to conflict (Bandura, 2018).

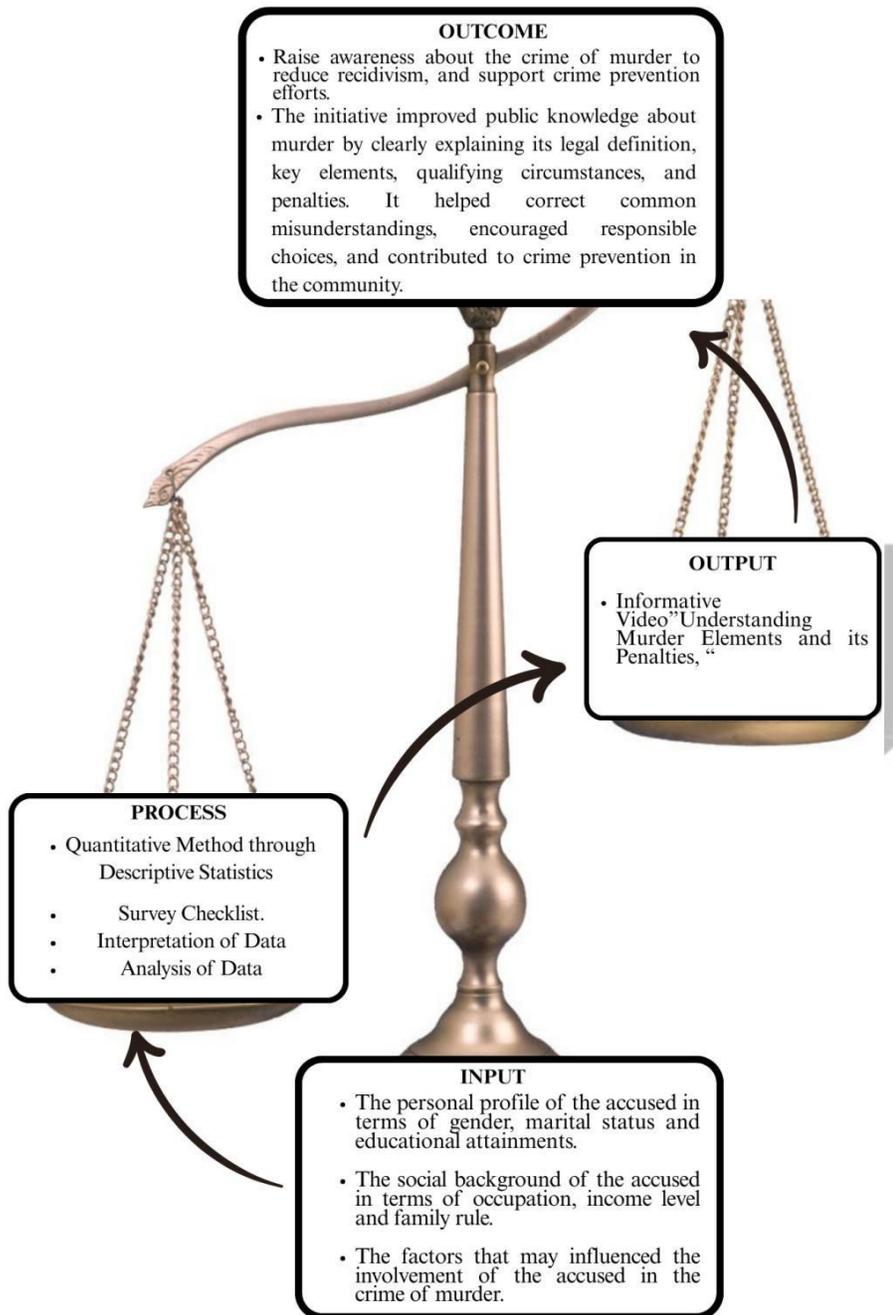
It highlights how the social environment of the accused individuals may have shaped their behavior. Many of those charged with murder may have been exposed to domestic violence, gang activity, or abusive parenting, which influenced their understanding of violence and aggression. Through social profiling, this study investigates how environmental influences might have played a role in their criminal actions, offering criminological insights into patterns of learned violence.

GENERAL STRAIN THEORY

General Strain Theory (GST), introduced by Robert Agnew, suggests that individuals who experience persistent stressors such as abuse, poverty, or failure are more likely to develop negative emotional responses like anger, depression, or frustration. These emotional reactions, if not addressed through proper coping strategies or support systems, may lead to deviant or violent behavior. GST highlights how emotional strain can push individuals to the breaking point, resulting in crime as a coping mechanism (Agnew, 2017).

The Theory offers a framework to understand how cumulative stress, economic hardship, family breakdown, or emotional neglect may have contributed to the actions of individuals accused of murder. The study aims to uncover whether these strains were present in their backgrounds and how such experiences shaped their emotional state. This theory supports the criminological process of profiling offenders by identifying the psychological and environmental pressures behind their crimes.

Conceptual Framework:



1. Paradigm of the Study

The IPOO model guided the flow of this study. The IPOO model is a systems-based approach that outlines how specific inputs are transformed through processes to produce outputs, which then lead to broader outcomes. It is commonly used in social science and organizational research to demonstrate the flow and impact of a study (Rosenzweig, 2016).

In this study, the input involved the personal profile of the accused in terms of gender, marital status, educational attainment, the social background of the accused in terms of occupation, income level, family rule and the factors that may influence them in committing the crime of murder. The process undertaken was a quantitative method through descriptive statistics, interpretation and analysis of data. The output of this study was an Informative video titled "Understanding Murder Its Elements and Penalties". The outcome of this study is to help raise awareness about the crime of murder to reduce recidivism and support crime prevention efforts.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study will benefit the following:

Accused\Individuals Facing Murder Charges\. Understanding the personal and social influences behind the actions of individuals who faced murder charges allowed for a deeper examination of the circumstances that shaped their behavior. It helped uncover factors such as trauma, environment, upbringing, or societal pressures that might have contributed to their actions. This perspective encouraged accountability while also opening the door for personal reflection, emotional healing, and rehabilitation. By viewing them through the lens of their lived experiences rather than solely their crime, society was able to promote a more compassionate and holistic approach to justice and reintegration.

Correctional Institutions. By providing detailed profiles and insights into the mental and social conditions of the accused, correctional facilities can design more effective rehabilitation programs, focused on trauma recovery, emotional regulation, and reintegration strategies tailored to the individual needs of inmates.

Families of the accused. The study helps families better understand the circumstances that may have led to their loved one's criminal involvement. This awareness can foster healing, reconciliation, and supportive environments essential for rehabilitation and preventing future criminal behavior within the household.

Community. A deeper understanding of the root causes of murder can aid communities in addressing systemic issues such as poverty, violence normalization, and lack of mental health resources. Awareness campaigns and community-based interventions may be developed to prevent youth from becoming future offenders.

Researchers. The findings can inform law enforcers, criminologists, and students about the importance of offender profiling, emotional and psychological assessments, and the role of social conditions in criminal behavior. This knowledge can enhance investigative methods and crime prevention strategies.

Future researchers. This study serves as a foundation for future academic investigations into violent crime, especially in the context of Philippine society. It encourages deeper exploration into psychological trauma, socio-economic factors, and institutional responses to violent offenders.

SCOPE AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study focused on the demographic characteristics of individuals facing murder charges who are not yet convicted, specifically, on their personal, social backgrounds and the possible reasons behind their involvement in the crime.

The respondents were limited to 17 individuals who are facing murder charges in the institution of Ilocos Norte Provincial Jail and Bureau of Jail Management and Penology Laoag City. This study is conducted during the second semester of academic year 2024-2025 until the first semester of academic year 2025-2026.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

To provide clarity and ensure consistent understanding throughout the study, the following key terms are defined as they are used in the context of this research:

Explore. This refers to taking a closer, more detailed look at something to better understand. It involves examining the lives and backgrounds of individuals accused of murder, as well as exploring the possible factors that may have contributed to the crime.

Factors. This refers to elements or conditions that contribute to a result, influence a situation or play a part in how something happens.

Accused/Individual Facing Murder Charges. This refers to persons who are officially accused in court of unlawfully causing the death of another person based on evidence related to the killing.

Influence. This refers to the power or effect that certain factors such as environment, upbringing, emotions, peers, or life experiences have on shaping a person's thoughts, decisions, and behavior.

Involvement. This refers to the act of taking part in or being connected with an activity, situation, or group. It can describe physical participation, emotional engagement, or even responsibility in something.

Personal Profile. This refers to an individual who faced murder charges describing their background, personality, and life experiences that influenced their actions. It included their upbringing, education, emotions, and values. Understanding their personal profile helped explain the reasons and situations that may have led to their behavior.

Social background. This refers to the social, economic, and cultural conditions in which a person is raised and lives. It includes the income, family role of a person and occupation.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURES AND STUDIES

This chapter provides the relevant and related literature that had been considered by the researchers, which reinforced the importance of carrying out the study. Furthermore, it offered additional information to properly appreciate the research for better understanding.

OVERVIEW OF THE LAW THAT PUNISHES THE CRIME OF MURDER

Murder was one of the most serious crimes addressed under Philippine criminal law. It was defined and penalized under Article 248 of the Revised Penal Code (RPC) of the Philippines. The law classified murder as a form of unlawful killing committed with qualifying circumstances that showed evident premeditation, cruelty, treachery, or use of means that weakened the defense of the victim. These elements distinguished murder from homicide and other forms of killing. According to Article 248, murder was punishable by reclusion perpetua to death, although the death penalty had been suspended in the country since 2006. The law provided clear standards for identifying when a killing escalated to the level of murder, based on the presence of aggravating factors such as evident premeditation or abuse of superior strength. Understanding the legal definition and punishment of murder was essential in this study, as it offered context to the criminal acts committed by the respondents. It also allowed the researchers to examine how the justice system treated individuals charged with such a grave offense and how the legal consequences shaped their lived experiences while awaiting or serving punishment (Article 248, RPC).

NEUROLOGICAL TRAITS LINKED TO VIOLENT BEHAVIOR

Research indicated that abnormalities in the prefrontal cortex, a key area of the brain involved in impulse control, decision-making, and emotional regulation, were frequently observed in individuals who committed violent crimes such as murder. The prefrontal cortex

helped regulate socially acceptable behavior and moral judgment. When this region was impaired, individuals experienced difficulty controlling aggressive impulses and showed reduced capacity for empathy, which increased the risk of violent behavior.

Neurological deficits in this brain area could result from genetic factors, brain injuries, or developmental issues. Such impairments disrupted an individual's ability to foresee the consequences of their actions or to inhibit harmful behaviors. This led to poor judgment and a greater tendency toward impulsive aggression, factors that were often evident in criminal offenders. Understanding these neurological underpinnings provided insight into the behavioral patterns of violent offenders. It highlighted the complexity of homicide motives and suggested that violent behavior was not solely a product of conscious choice but was also influenced by underlying brain dysfunctions (Peschardt, 2015).

IMPACT OF CHILDHOOD TRAUMA ON CRIMINALITY

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), such as physical abuse, emotional neglect, and exposure to domestic violence, had long-lasting effects on brain development, particularly in regions responsible for emotion regulation and impulse control. These early traumas altered stress response systems and hindered the ability to manage emotions effectively. As a result, individuals with a history of ACEs were more susceptible to developing aggressive tendencies and engaging in criminal behavior later in life. Several studies linked childhood trauma to increased risks of violent offenses, including homicide. The persistent emotional and psychological scars left by abuse or neglect often manifested as difficulty in controlling anger, heightened emotional sensitivity, and a propensity for impulsive actions. Without proper intervention or support, these individuals found themselves trapped in cycles of violence and criminality.

This evidence underscored the critical importance of early intervention and trauma-informed care in preventing violent crimes. Recognizing the lived realities of offenders shaped by traumatic childhoods allowed for a more empathetic and effective approach to criminal rehabilitation and prevention (Jennings, 2016).

ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES ON VIOLENT OFFENDERS

The social environment played a crucial role in shaping an individual's behavior and attitudes toward violence. Studies showed that growing up in impoverished neighborhoods with frequent exposure to community violence increased the likelihood of adopting aggression as a normal coping mechanism. Peer pressure and the need for self-protection within these environments often led to violent behaviors becoming socially acceptable or even necessary for survival. Environmental stressors such as lack of educational opportunities, unemployment, and inadequate social support systems compounded the risks of violent offending (Wright, 2017).

NEUROCRIMINOLOGY AND BRAIN ABNORMALITIES IN OFFENDERS

The study revealed that many murder suspects exhibited impairments in areas of the brain responsible for decision-making, impulse control, and emotion regulation, specifically the prefrontal cortex and amygdala. These findings suggested that biological predispositions could make some individuals more vulnerable to committing violent crimes when combined with negative environmental factors. A person with a damaged impulse control center was more likely to act aggressively under pressure or threat. This literature was crucial in expanding the personal profile of murder suspects. It encouraged criminologists to consider both psychological and biological aspects in offender assessment and rehabilitation programs (Raine, 2018).

PERSONALITY DISORDERS AND VIOLENT ACTS

Personality disorders, such as antisocial and borderline personality disorders, were marked by emotional dysregulation, impulsivity, and a lack of empathy, all of which contributed to a higher risk of violent behavior. Individuals with these disorders often struggled to manage anger and control aggressive impulses, which could escalate to criminal violence, including murder. Research indicated that these disorders impaired judgment and reduced sensitivity to the consequences of one's actions, making violent behavior more likely. The emotional instability typical of these conditions further complicated interpersonal relationships and social functioning, increasing the risk of conflicts that might turn violent.

Recognizing the link between personality disorders and violence was critical for the criminal justice and mental health systems. It highlighted the need for comprehensive psychological assessment and treatment in offender rehabilitation programs to address underlying psychopathologies and reduce recidivism. (Smith, 2018)

PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF MURDER OFFENDERS

A study published in the *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* by Beaver, Wright, and DeLisi examined the psychological traits of individuals convicted of murder in various correctional facilities in the United States. It found that many offenders displayed characteristics such as impulsivity, low empathy, and a high degree of childhood trauma, suggesting that personal history played a major role in violent decision-making. These individuals often committed murder in emotionally heightened or reactive states, rather than through premeditated planning. The study emphasized the importance of understanding the mental and emotional states of offenders in order to determine appropriate interventions.

Through in-depth interviews and psychological assessments, the researchers revealed that a significant number of the subjects had unresolved emotional issues that contributed to their actions. These issues were often ignored or untreated throughout their lives, which led to violent outbursts as a form of coping or expression. In the context of criminology, this literature supported the need for psychological profiling and mental health screening in criminal justice processes. It aligned with the research by reinforcing how personal experiences and emotional struggles influenced violent behavior, an aspect vital in offender rehabilitation and policy-making. (Beaver, 2018)

THE ROLE OF LIVED EXPERIENCE IN UNDERSTANDING VIOLENT CRIMES

In a European study conducted by Gåsdal and Jørgensen (2020), researchers focused on the lived experiences of murder suspects using a phenomenological approach. The study involved qualitative interviews with inmates in Norway and found that most participants had experienced trauma, rejection, or chronic neglect prior to committing violent acts. These individuals often internalized emotional pain and viewed violence as either justified or inevitable. One of the central findings was that many murder suspects rationalized their actions

as responses to betrayal, fear, or protection of personal dignity. This behavior pointed to a complex web of psychological and situational triggers that shaped how they perceived and responded to conflict. The study suggested that motives behind murder were often misunderstood because society overlooked the internal narratives of the offenders. From a criminological perspective, the research highlighted how the subjective experiences of offenders enhanced the understanding of motive and risk factors. (Gåsdal, 2020).

CULTURAL AND FAMILIAL INFLUENCES ON VIOLENT BEHAVIOR

In the Philippines, cultural values and family dynamics played a major role in shaping individual behavior, including tendencies toward violence. Research conducted by David and Mercado (2016) explored how family conflict, patriarchal norms, and exposure to domestic violence in Filipino households affected the emotional development of children. They found that unresolved family issues and a lack of emotional support led to pent-up aggression, especially among young males. These individuals often grew up internalizing toxic behaviors such as dominance, revenge, and suppression of emotion. In many cases, such behaviors were considered “normal” and even acceptable within certain communities, particularly in environments where violence was a common part of life. This normalization became a foundation for violent behavior later on, especially when individuals were exposed to stress or social pressure. (David, 2016).

SOCIOECONOMIC STRUGGLES AND CRIMINAL MOTIVATION

Socioeconomic hardship remained a consistent factor in understanding criminal behavior in the Philippines. In a study by Ilagan and Ramos (2019), individuals charged with murder shared common stories of poverty, joblessness, and desperation. These economic struggles were not only financial but also emotional, creating feelings of helplessness, anger, and resentment toward society, to the point that many offenders committed crimes out of a perceived lack of options. Some felt pushed to violence due to social humiliation, unresolved debts, or threats to their family. Their “lived realities” were shaped by constant survival-mode thinking, where morality often took a backseat to immediate needs and threats. (Ilagan, 2019).

MORAL DISENGAGEMENT AND JUSTIFICATION OF VIOLENCE

Moral disengagement was a psychological process that enabled individuals to commit violent acts without experiencing guilt or remorse. In the context of murder cases, this mental mechanism often manifested when offenders rationalized their actions as acts of self-defense, vengeance, or justice. These justifications served as a way for individuals to emotionally detach from the moral weight of their behavior. Evidence of this phenomenon was found in research conducted at the University of the Philippines Diliman, where inmates charged with murder described their actions as necessary responses to personal betrayal, abuse, or threats to their loved ones. Rather than seeing their crimes as purely criminal, they constructed their own moral codes influenced by survival, loyalty, and personal trauma. These insights illustrated how lived experiences and emotional wounds shaped the moral reasoning of individuals involved in violent crimes. (Santiago, 2020).

SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND VIOLENT CRIMES IN PHILIPPINE DETENTION CENTERS

Substance abuse had long been linked to violent behavior in the Philippines, especially among individuals charged with serious crimes such as murder. In-depth documentation from a 2021 research project in select provincial jails revealed that many detainees committed violent crimes while under the influence of drugs or alcohol. These substances not only impaired their judgment but also intensified existing emotional and psychological issues. Interviews with detainees indicated that many of them used drugs as a form of escape from personal trauma, poverty, or chronic stress. However, prolonged use led to aggression, paranoia, and impulsivity factors that escalated minor disputes into fatal encounters. The lived experiences of these individuals showed that their decisions were heavily influenced by the substances they consumed, not purely by rational intent. This literature highlighted the complex intersection between addiction, emotional instability, and criminal behavior. Understanding how substance use altered perception and behavior was vital in addressing the motives behind violent crimes and improving rehabilitation programs in Philippine correctional institutions. (BJMP, 2021).

PSYCHOLOGICAL PROFILES OF FILIPINO CRIMINAL OFFENDERS

A study conducted by the Psychological Association of the Philippines in 2018 provided a profile of inmates convicted of murder and other violent crimes. The study, based on in-depth psychological evaluations and interviews, found that many of the offenders had a history of untreated mental health issues, low emotional intelligence, and poor coping strategies. These psychological weaknesses often emerged in early adolescence and were never addressed due to lack of access to mental healthcare. The researchers noted patterns of unresolved anger, deep-seated fear of abandonment, and feelings of powerlessness. These emotions often pushed individuals to commit violent acts as a way to regain control or assert dominance in their environment. Many also admitted to impulsive behavior triggered by emotional stress, jealousy, or betrayal, highlighting how motives were rooted not just in logic but in psychological pain. This study reinforced the idea that the mind of a killer was shaped by both internal psychological states and external pressures. It also advocated for the integration of mental health services into the correctional system, which could have played a key role in rehabilitation and prevention. (Psychological Association of the Philippines, 2018).

EMOTIONAL TRAUMA AND THE FILIPINO CRIMINAL MIND

A qualitative study by Gonzales and Llamas focused on the psychological background of inmates charged with violent crimes in Metro Manila. The research found that most of the participants had suffered severe emotional trauma during their childhood, including abandonment, sexual abuse, or prolonged poverty. These experiences shaped their worldview and affected how they handled emotions such as anger, grief, and fear. The inmates described their crimes not simply as acts of violence, but as outcomes of long-standing emotional pain and lack of support. Many admitted that they had never received help or understanding from family or society. Their narratives revealed patterns of emotional suppression, irrational thinking, and distorted justifications for their actions. This study was significant in criminology because it bridged psychology and criminal behavior. It emphasized the importance of trauma-informed practices in dealing with violent offenders. The present research echoed this literature by seeking to understand how emotional trauma and lived experiences contributed to the mindset of those charged with murder. (Gonzales, 2021)

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methods and procedures used in the study. It specifically includes the research method, respondents of the study, sampling procedures, data gathering tool, data gathering procedure, treatment of data and ethical consideration.

RESEARCH METHOD AND DESIGN

The study employed a quantitative research method through descriptive statistics. The quantitative approach allowed the researchers to collect measurable data that could identify patterns, test ideas, and establish relationships between variables in an objective and reliable manner.

The descriptive design, on the other hand, focused on providing a detailed account of the personal and social profiles of individuals accused of murder without manipulating variables.

A quantitative research design is a systematic approach used to collect and analyze numerical data to identify patterns, test hypotheses, and examine relationships between variables through statistical methods (Creswell, 2018).

Descriptive statistics are used to summarize data in an organized manner by describing the relationship between variables in a sample or population. Calculating descriptive statistics represents a vital first step when conducting research and should always occur before making inferential statistical comparisons (Kaur, 2018).

POPULATION AND LOCALE OF THE STUDY

The respondents of the study were 17 detained individuals accused of murder in Laoag City, Ilocos Norte. It is composed of 11 respondents from Ilocos Norte Provincial Jail (INPJ) and six from Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) in Laoag City, Ilocos Norte. These individuals had been formally charged and were under detention, making them appropriate

sources of data for the objectives of the research. The respondents were selected through total enumeration. All individuals within the two facilities who met the criteria of being charged with murder during the data collection period were included as respondents. Total enumeration, also known as a census, is a research method in which data is collected from every member of the population, rather than from a sample, to ensure complete and accurate information about the entire population (Babbie, 2017).

Institutional Facilities	Number of Participants
Ilocos Norte Provincial Jail (INPJ)	11
Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP)	6
Total:	17

Table 1. Population of the Study

DATA GATHERING TOOL

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the personal and social profiles of individuals accused of murder, this study employed a structured questionnaire checklist as its primary data collection tool. This quantitative approach ensured uniformity across all respondents, allowing for the systematic collection of measurable data that could be statistically analyzed. The questionnaire consisted of a closed-ended checklist designed to gather information on key variables such as demographic profile, social background and factors that may influence the involvement of the accused in the crime of murder.

All questionnaires were administered individually in private, secure spaces within the correctional facilities, with full coordination and approval from jail authorities. Prior to participation, informed consent was obtained from each respondent. The responses were recorded using either paper-based, then encoded and subjected to statistical analysis. This tool facilitated the efficient collection of quantifiable data while upholding the ethical standards and confidentiality required when conducting research with incarcerated individuals.

DATA GATHERING PROCEDURE

The data for this study were gathered through a structured process. First, a formal letter of request to conduct study was submitted to the wardens of both the Ilocos Norte Provincial Jail (INPJ) and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) in Laoag City. The letter explained that the research focused on individuals charged with murder and requested permission to conduct the study inside the facilities. After reviewing the request, the wardens of both facilities granted approval and scheduled the researchers to conduct face-to-face interviews with the detainees.

Each questionnaire checklist, which also served as the survey, lasted approximately 20 to 30 minutes and was conducted in a private setting within the facility to ensure the confidentiality and comfort of the respondents. It was strictly observed that no pictures, videos, or recordings of any kind were allowed inside the jail facilities to respect institutional policies, ensure security, and protect the privacy of the respondents.

After the surveys were completed, the wardens reminded the researchers that all information gathered would be used strictly for academic purposes. The researchers subsequently tabulated, organized, and reviewed the survey results to ensure accuracy, clarity, and proper analysis of the data.

TREATMENT OF DATA

The study employed frequency and percentage distributions to analyze and interpret the demographic and social characteristics of the respondents, such as their occupations as construction workers or farmers, their low-income status, their roles as fathers, their religious involvement, and the fact that many indicated self-defense as the cause of their actions, allowing the researchers to identify patterns and highlight the most common traits within the population. By converting these frequencies into percentages, the researchers were able to present the data in a clear and interpretable manner, providing a solid basis for the development of an informative video on the elements of murder and its penalties, which aims to raise public awareness, promote

responsible decision-making, and support the rehabilitation and understanding of persons deprived of liberty.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

The researchers followed strict ethical guidelines to protect the rights and well-being of all participants. Informed consent was obtained from each respondent prior to participation, ensuring that they fully understood the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and their right to refuse or withdraw at any point without penalty. Participants were clearly informed that their involvement was voluntary and that their decision had no impact on their legal status or treatment within the facility. To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, no personal identifiers were included in the survey forms. Each participant was assigned a coded reference number, and all completed questionnaires were securely stored in a locked file or password-protected digital folder accessible only to the researchers.

The survey was conducted in a safe, private space within the detention facility to protect the participants' privacy and encourage honest responses. Respondents were allowed to skip any question they felt uncomfortable with. Although the data collection tool was a structured questionnaire with no direct probing into emotional trauma, whenever signs of emotional distress were observed, the researcher paused the session and, if necessary, referred the individual to a mental health professional in coordination with jail authorities. All findings were reported in a manner that respected the dignity of the participants and safeguarded their identity, thereby ensuring ethical integrity throughout the research process.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter presents the data gathered which are shown in tabular and graphical form that are accompanied by related interpretation. This study explores the personal profile and social background of individuals charged with murder including the factors that influenced the involvement of the accused to the crime.

PERSONAL PROFILE OF THE INDIVIDUALS CHARGED WITH MURDER

This section reveals the personal profile of individuals facing murder charges in terms of sex, marital status, and educational attainment.

Table 2 Personal Profile of the Individuals Charged with Murder. (n = 17)

PERSONAL PROFILE	f	(%)
Sex		
Male	17	100
Female	0	0
Marital Status		
Single	6	35.3
Married	11	64.7
Educational Attainment		
Elementary Graduate	4	23.5
High School Graduate	8	47.1
College Graduate	1	5.9
Undergraduate	3	17.6
Vocational Course	1	5.9

Table 2 presents the personal profile of individuals charged with murder as to sex, marital status, and educational attainment.

Sex. Out of the 17 respondents, it was shown that 100% were male. This indicated that the study sample was entirely composed of male individuals who were accused of murder.

The result highlighted a male-dominated profile among the respondents, reaffirming the general observation that men were more frequently involved in violent crimes. This finding could have been attributed to gender-related roles, where males were often associated with traits such as dominance, aggression, and control.

The implication of this finding suggests that male individuals were more likely to be engaged in violent behavior such as murder. This reinforced the perspective that unresolved conflicts, impulsivity, and exposure to violent environments might have normalized aggression among men. The absence of female respondents also indicated that male participation in such crimes was significantly higher, which reflected broader societal and cultural influences.

This finding was consistent with the explanation of Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which emphasized that individuals learned aggressive behavior through modeling and reinforcement. Wright and DeLisi (2018) also noted that male offenders often exhibited high impulsivity and low empathy, which were traits linked to violent behavior. Similarly, Boman (2017) emphasized that exposure to violence in male-dominated environments increased the likelihood of adopting aggression as an acceptable response. These studies validated the result that male dominance was a significant factor in violent criminal involvement.

Marital Status. Based on the responses of the 17 respondents, the data shows that 64.7% (11) were married, while 35.3% (6) were single. This distribution reveals that a greater proportion of the accused individuals are married.

The result suggested that being married may influence involvement in criminal activities such as murder. Married individuals often face heavier responsibilities, including financial support for their families, child-rearing, and maintaining household stability. When these expectations are not met, stress and frustration may accumulate, which can lead to conflicts that escalate into violent behavior.

The result of the study affirms that family-related pressures, such as unresolved conflicts, financial strain, and unmet expectations in marriage, can heighten emotional stress that may trigger violent tendencies. Although marriage is generally viewed as a stabilizing factor in society, the presence of overwhelming obligations without adequate coping mechanisms can instead contribute to maladaptive behaviors and even criminal actions.

Marital status significantly impacts involvement in violent crime such as murder. Married men are more likely to be perpetrators of intimate partner or family-related murders, often following

escalating patterns of abuse characterized by previous physical violence, jealousy, substance misuse, and firearm access. These dynamics highlight the complex interplay of psychosocial stressors, relationship conflicts, and access to lethal means within marriages. Intimate partner homicide, a subset of murder, is a preventable public health concern, emphasizing how marital status shapes violent crime through relationship risk factors and abusive behaviors (Adnan, 2022). Similarly, Regan and Ramos (2019) highlighted that economic hardship within households increases the risk of aggression and violent acts. These studies strengthen the observation that marital pressures can play a significant role in the commission of serious crimes.

Educational Attainment. The findings show that among the 17 respondents the data revealed that 47.1% (8) were high school graduates, 23.5% (4) were elementary graduates, 17.6% (3) were undergraduates, while only 5.9% (1) reached college graduation, and another 5.9% (1) completed a vocational course.

The results indicated that the majority of the respondents had limited educational attainment, with most not progressing beyond secondary education. This suggested that low levels of education may have been a contributing factor to their criminal involvement, as it restricted access to stable employment and sustainable income, often trapping individuals in cycles of poverty and social disadvantage.

The study revealed that limited education not only reduced opportunities for lawful and productive work but also increased exposure to negative environments where deviant behaviors were normalized. When individuals lacked the educational qualifications needed to succeed, frustration and feelings of inadequacy could arise, which in turn might have escalated into aggression and criminal actions. Education, therefore, played a crucial role not only in providing opportunities but also in shaping values, coping mechanisms, and social integration.

This finding is consistent with Agnew's General Strain Theory, which argued that blocked opportunities for success increased strain and frustration, potentially leading to criminal behavior. Social Learning Theory also explained that individuals who left school early were more likely to be influenced by peers and environments where deviance was reinforced. From a Psychodynamic perspective, unmet aspirations and academic failure could leave unresolved

emotional conflicts that manifested in violent tendencies. Jennings (2016) emphasized that adverse early-life conditions, including limited education, heightened the risk of violent criminality. Similarly, the Psychological Association of the Philippines (2018) found that low educational attainment was a common characteristic among violent offenders, often linked to poor coping strategies. These studies validated the conclusion that education was a key protective factor against crime, and its absence increased vulnerability to serious offenses.

SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF INDIVIDUALS CHARGED WITH MURDER

This section shows the data gathered on the social background of individuals charged with murder in terms of occupation, income, family role and community involvement.

Table 3 Social Background of Individuals Charged with Murder. (n = 17)

SOCIAL BACKGROUND	f	(%)
Occupation		
Construction Worker	3	17.6
Farmer	3	17.6
Public Employee	1	5.9
Unemployed	1	5.9
Electrician	1	5.9
Security Guard	2	11.8
Tricycle Driver	2	11.8
Foreman	1	5.9
Fisherman	2	11.8
Student	1	5.9
Income Bracket		
₱15,000 and below	12	70.6
₱15,001–20,000	3	17.6
₱30,001–35,000	1	5.9
₱36,001 and above	1	5.9
Family Role		
Father	12	70.6
Son	5	29.4
Community Involvement		
Religious Org Member	3	17.6
Laborer’s Organization	2	11.8
Farmers Association	1	5.9
Tricycle Association	1	5.9
Fraternity	1	5.9
SK Member	1	5.9
Fisherman Association	2	11.8

Table 3 shows the social background of individual charges with murder as to occupation, income bracket, family role and community involvement.

Occupation. The data showed that the respondents came from low-paying and unstable jobs. Specifically, 17.6% (3) were construction workers, 17.6% (3) were farmers, 11.8% (2) were security guards, 11.8% (2) were tricycle drivers, and 11.8% (2) were fishermen. Meanwhile, 5.9% (1) were public employees, 5.9% (1) were electricians, 5.9% (1) were foremen, and 5.9% (1) were students.

The results indicated that the majority of respondents were engaged in manual labor and unstable forms of employment. Such occupations typically offered limited wages, job insecurity, and little opportunity for upward mobility. These conditions may have contributed to the respondents' frustration and resentment, as their work did not provide consistent financial stability or social recognition.

The result implied that individuals in unstable and low-paying jobs were more vulnerable to economic hardships, which could create pressure to seek alternative means of coping. In situations where legitimate opportunities for advancement were scarce, individuals might have turned to crime as a way of addressing their frustrations or asserting control over their circumstances. Thus, employment instability and economic struggle appeared to be significant risk factors for criminal involvement.

This finding was supported by Agnew's General Strain Theory, which explained that economic hardship and blocked opportunities intensified strain, leading to deviant behavior. Social Learning Theory also suggested that in labor-intensive environments, individuals might have been influenced by peers who normalized aggression as a coping mechanism. From a Psychodynamic perspective, repeated occupational setbacks could have triggered unresolved feelings of inadequacy, which were later expressed through aggression. Ilagan and Ramos (2019) similarly reported that poverty and joblessness often pushed individuals toward violent crimes.

Gonzales and Llamas (2021) also observed that chronic socioeconomic struggles exacerbated emotional trauma, thereby increasing the likelihood of violent behavior.

Monthly Income Level. The results showed that 70.6% (12) earned ₱15,000 and below, 17.6% (3) earned between ₱15,001 and ₱20,000, while only 5.9% (1) fell into the ₱30,001–₱35,000 range, and another 5.9% (1) earned ₱36,001 and above.

The results indicated that the overwhelming majority of respondents lived on ₱15,000 or less per month. Such income levels reflected significant economic deprivation, with limited resources to support even the most basic needs. This economic situation may have increased frustration and resentment, which could have contributed to involvement in serious crimes.

Significance of these findings is that financial struggles severely limited opportunities for stability and upward mobility. Poverty may have placed immense pressure on individuals to meet family responsibilities and social expectations, leaving them vulnerable to feelings of inadequacy and humiliation. In the absence of healthy coping mechanisms, these frustrations might have escalated into aggressive or violent behavior.

This finding was consistent with Agnew's General Strain Theory, which explained that poverty and blocked opportunities for success created chronic frustration that often resulted in deviance. Social Learning Theory added that individuals from impoverished communities were more likely to be exposed to peers who normalized aggression as a way of resolving disputes or gaining respect. Psychodynamic perspectives also suggested that unresolved emotional distress from financial hardship could manifest in violence when coping mechanisms were absent. Ilagan and Ramos (2019) emphasized that poverty was one of the strongest drivers of violent crime in the Philippines. Similarly, Santiago and Velasco (2020) found that many offenders justified violent acts as responses to economic humiliation or survival pressures.

Family Role. Among the 17 individuals, 70.6% (12) were fathers, while 29.4% (5) were sons. This showed that the majority of those accused of murder had assumed the role of primary breadwinners within their households.

The results indicated that most respondents bore the responsibility of being family providers. The role of a father often carried expectations of financial stability, authority, and protection. When these expectations were unmet, it might have created frustration, stress, and tension that could have escalated into aggressive or violent behavior.

Application of the findings is that the pressures of being a family head or provider could have intensified strain among the respondents. Failing to meet familial expectations such as providing basic needs or maintaining authority might have revived unresolved feelings of inadequacy and frustration. These emotional burdens, when unmanaged, could have translated into aggressive tendencies and involvement in serious crimes.

This finding was consistent with Agnew's General Strain Theory, which emphasized that economic strain and the inability to meet social and familial expectations could lead to anger and criminal acts. From a Psychodynamic perspective, unmet obligations might have resurfaced as unresolved feelings of inferiority, later expressed through aggression. Social Learning Theory further explained that cultural expectations of men as strong providers reinforced the use of violence when dignity or authority was threatened. David and Mercado (2016) similarly found that Filipino patriarchal pressures often intensified aggressive tendencies within households. Gonzales and Llamas (2021) also emphasized that emotional trauma tied to family responsibilities shaped violent behaviors among offenders

Community Involvement. Analysis of the 17 individuals shows that, 47.1% (8) were members of religious organizations, 17.6% (3) belonged to laborers' organizations, 11.8% (2) were part of farmers' associations, while 5.9% (1 each) were affiliated with tricycle associations, fraternities, SK organizations, or fishermen's associations.

The result showed that nearly half of the respondents were engaged in religious organizations, suggesting that participation in faith-based groups was the most common form of community involvement. However, this affiliation did not guarantee deterrence from violent behavior, as all respondents were still accused of murder. Other forms of involvement, such as membership in labor, farmers', and transport groups, indicated a connection to livelihood-based communities, yet these too did not shield individuals from engaging in crime.

Impact of the study suggested that community involvement, while offering belonging and identity, was not enough to prevent deviant behavior when underlying issues such as economic struggles, strained relationships, or exposure to violence persisted. Membership in community groups may provide social ties, but without strong guidance, accountability, or positive reinforcement, individuals could still develop or sustain violent tendencies.

This result aligned with Bandura’s Social Learning Theory, which emphasized that individuals learn behaviors including aggression through observation and reinforcement, even within social groups. Agnew’s General Strain Theory also explained that despite community ties, unresolved stressors such as poverty, frustration, or family problems could push individuals toward crime. Supporting this, Santiago (2020) highlighted how moral disengagement allows offenders to justify harmful acts despite social belonging, while Gåsdal and Jørgensen (2020) stressed that offenders often rationalize violence even when integrated into community and familial settings.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE ACCUSED IN THE CRIME OF MURDER

This section presents the factors that influenced the involvement of the accused in the crime of murder as self defense, influence of peers, intense anger, falsely accused.

Table 4 Factors that Influenced the Involvement of the Accused in the Crime of Murder (n=17)

Factors that influenced the accused to be involved in the crime of murder	f	(%)
Self defense or Perceived threat	8	47.1
Influence of peer or gangs	1	5.9
False Accused	1	5.9
False Accused	7	41.2

Table 4 exhibits the factors that influenced individuals’ involvement in the crime of murder.

Factors that influenced the accused to be involved in the crime of murder. Out of the 17 individuals, 47.1% (8) stated self-defense or perceived threat as the reason, while 41.2 % (7)

reported being falsely accused. Other identified factors included influence of peers or gangs 5.9%, (1), intense anger or jealousy 5.9%, (1).

The result showed that most of the accused justified their involvement in murder either as an act of self-preservation or as a consequence of wrongful accusation, while only a few admitted motivations tied to peer influence, emotional outbursts, or economic reasons. This indicates that a significant proportion of the accused perceived themselves as victims of circumstance rather than intentional offenders.

Insights from the study suggest that violent crimes such as murder may not always stem from deliberate criminal intent but from situational pressures, strained interactions, or justice system limitations. The prominence of self-defense and false accusation points to the importance of careful case assessment, as misinterpretation of events may lead to wrongful charges. Meanwhile, the smaller percentages are attributed to peer influence, anger, and highlight the role of emotional regulation, social environment, and economic stress as underlying triggers for violent behavior.

This result is supported by Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which emphasized that individuals may learn and adopt aggressive responses from peers or groups that model such behaviors, as reflected in the cases influenced by gangs or jealousy. Similarly, Agnew's General Strain Theory explains that exposure to stressors such as threats, injustices, or frustrations can push individuals toward criminal actions as coping mechanisms. In line with this, research by Broidy and Agnew (1997) noted that negative emotions like anger often mediate the link between strain and crime, while Akers and Jennings (2015) emphasized how peer associations reinforce learned violent behavior.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION , AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a summary of the findings of Chapter 4, where conclusions and recommendations were developed based on the data gathered and analyzed. The chapter begins by receiving the key findings of the study, highlighting the most significant results. It then proceeds to present the conclusions drawn from the data. Finally, the chapter outlines recommendations for the future research and practice, based on the insights gained from the study.

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The study found that all 17 respondents charged with murder were male. Most were married (64.7%) and had reached only a high school level of education (47.1%), with few attaining college or vocational studies. Their occupations were mainly low-income and unstable jobs such as construction work, farming, and tricycle driving. A majority (70.6%) earned ₱15,000 or below monthly, indicating financial hardship and limited economic stability.

Regarding family roles, 70.6% of the respondents were fathers, indicating that most carried provider responsibilities within their households. In terms of community involvement, nearly half (47.1%) were members of religious organizations, while others participated in labor, farmer, tricycle, or youth groups. Despite these affiliations, community engagement did not prevent their involvement in violent incidents.

The most common factor associated with their involvement in murder cases was self-defense or perceived threat (47.1%), followed by claims of being falsely accused (41.2%). Less frequently cited influences included peer or gang pressure and strong emotional triggers such as anger or jealousy (5.9%).

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study indicate that individuals charged with murder in the Ilocos Norte Provincial Jail and BJMP Laoag City generally come from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds, characterized by limited education, unstable low-income occupations, and financial hardship. Most are married men and fathers, suggesting they carry significant family responsibilities that may contribute to stress and vulnerability. Although many were engaged in religious or community groups, such involvement did not necessarily deter them from becoming involved in violent incidents. The most common factors leading to their alleged participation in murder cases were self-defense or perceived threats and claims of wrongful accusation, with only a small portion influenced by emotional triggers or peer pressure. Overall, the results highlight the complex interplay of personal, economic, and situational factors in understanding why individuals become involved in serious criminal offenses such as murder.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For the Individual Facing Murder Charges:

- Demonstrate good behavior, respect facility rules, and maintain discipline to support peace and order within the institution.
- Participate in rehabilitation programs, including counseling, emotional management sessions, and self-reflection activities, especially since many incidents stemmed from self-defense or perceived threats.
- Join skills-building programs related to construction, farming, or livelihood to strengthen existing skills and prepare for reintegration into society.
- Practice self-control, patience, and positive decision-making to avoid conflicts and promote personal growth.
- Engage actively in religious activities or spiritual guidance sessions to reinforce moral values, strengthen faith, and build a renewed outlook on life.
- Take advantage of available health and wellness activities to reduce stress and support emotional stability.

FOR INSTITUTIONAL FACILITY:

- Implement structured rehabilitation programs focusing on emotional healing, conflict de-escalation, and anger management, addressing the common struggles of individuals acting out of self-defense.
- Provide accessible education and skills-training linked to construction work, agriculture, and basic livelihood to empower individuals from low-income backgrounds.
- Continue offering literacy programs, ALS classes, and spiritual formation sessions to guide inmates toward positive values and personal development.
- Conduct regular physical fitness activities and health monitoring to promote overall well-being and reduce aggressive behavior.
- Encourage involvement in productivity programs such as gardening, farming, carpentry, or facility maintenance to build responsibility and work readiness.
- Strengthen religious and moral support services, recognizing their importance to inmates who are active members of faith communities.

FOR COMMUNITY:

- Provide counseling, emotional support, and reintegration assistance to both offenders and their families to address trauma, stigma, and the effects of violent incidents.
- Conduct community awareness activities and dialogues that promote understanding, empathy, and acceptance of individuals returning after incarceration.
- Establish family-reconciliation programs and supervised visits to maintain strong family connections, especially for fathers who are primary providers.
- Offer livelihood programs, vocational training, and job placement opportunities in construction, farming, and small-scale entrepreneurship to help low-income individuals rebuild stable lives.
- Strengthen partnerships with religious organizations to provide continued moral guidance and mentorship, supporting the spiritual growth of returning offenders.
- Introduce community-based conflict management and safety education programs to prevent future incidents and promote peaceful coexistence.

Rationale

The *Informative Video: Understanding Murder Elements and Its Penalties* aims to raise public awareness about the legal definition of murder, its key elements, and the penalties associated with it under the law. This initiative seeks to educate individuals about the seriousness of the offense, clarify common misconceptions, and help the community understand how legal systems distinguish murder from other related crimes such as homicide or self-defense. Through clear explanations and visual presentation, the video provides essential knowledge that can help prevent violent incidents and promote responsible behavior.

According to the study's results, a large part of the surveyed population showed a poor knowledge of the legal definition of murder, its essential elements, qualifying circumstances, and the factors that could lessen criminal liability according to the law. (Respicio, n.d.). These findings indicate a substantial gap in public legal awareness regarding serious criminal offenses. In response to this identified gap, the researchers independently conceptualized and developed an informative video as an educational intervention. The video systematically explains the elements of murder, the distinctions between murder and related offenses such as homicide and self-defense, the applicable qualifying and mitigating circumstances, and the corresponding legal penalties.

To address these needs, the researchers developed an informative video that explains the elements of murder, the qualifying circumstances, the possible defenses, and the corresponding legal penalties. The video aims not only to provide knowledge but also to encourage critical thinking and responsible decision-making within the community. By improving public understanding of the law, this initiative hopes to prevent future crimes, promote safety, and cultivate a more informed and law-abiding society.

OBJECTIVES

- Provide clear, accurate, and reliable information on the legal definition and essential elements of murder to enhance public understanding of the seriousness of the offense under the law.

- Develop and present an informative educational video that explains murder, its qualifying and mitigating circumstances, possible defenses, and the corresponding legal penalties in a simple, engaging, and accessible manner.
- Distinguish murder from related offenses such as homicide and self-defense to reduce misinformation and help individuals understand how the legal system evaluates violent acts.
- Promote responsible decision-making and crime prevention by increasing awareness of legal consequences, encouraging non-violent conflict resolution, and fostering a safer and more law-abiding community.

STRATEGY

- The researchers will first develop an informative video entitled “*Understanding Murder: Elements and Its Penalties*”, which aims to educate the public about the legal definition of murder, its essential elements, and the corresponding penalties under the law. This video is designed to raise awareness, correct common misconceptions, and promote crime prevention by encouraging informed and responsible decision-making.
- The researchers will then coordinate with the school’s official Facebook page to post and disseminate the video, allowing it to reach a wider audience and further strengthen public legal awareness within the community.

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