

The demographic distribution and experiences of Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL): An analysis

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Abstract

The recognition of children as the future assets of any nation is a fundamental principle that underscores the importance of investing in their well-being, education, and development. Using the qualitative research method, the researchers hoped to gather data relative to the demographic distribution of the CICL based on the official records. Further, this research analyzed the experiences of CICLs as perceived by law enforcers and social workers. The phenomenological approach was utilized to determine the root causes of why the CICLs commit offenses, the effects of being delinquents, the gaps and challenges in the juvenile justice system, and the importance of the government and other institutional support. The data was then treated through a thematic analysis. Research reveals four major themes: Tabula Rasa (Blank Slate), Villains are Made by the Society, Snake and Ladder, and It Takes a Village to Raise a Child. Findings from the study contribute to a nuanced understanding of the factors influencing the involvement of children in conflict with the law and shed light on the effectiveness, challenges, and gaps of the current legal mechanism, the Juvenile Justice Welfare Act of 2006. Recommendations based on the research outcomes aim to inform policy and practice, fostering a more just and equitable system for CICL within Quezon Province. Ultimately, this research endeavors to bridge the gap between academic inquiry and practical implementation, fostering an environment that prioritizes the rights and well-being of children in conflict with the law.

Keywords: children, conflict, juvenile, law, social workers

The demographic distribution and experiences of Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL): An analysis

1. Introduction

No one should be left behind. Children have the right to life, survival, and development, and these rights must be protected. The prevalence of social issues exacerbated by poverty has manifested in elevated crime rates, with children emerging as one of the most vulnerable groups within our society. Driven by a complex interplay of factors and circumstances in their environment, children find themselves compelled to engage in criminal activities. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) legally binds international agreements that set out every child's civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights, regardless of race, religion, or abilities. 196 countries have signed it and serves as the global framework for children's rights. Although several nations appear to be working towards developing a more humane juvenile justice system, on the surface, the truth is less idealistic. In the Southeast Asian Region, Indonesia was one of the first countries to become an early signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Children. They already passed a commendable law no. 11 of 2012, the Juvenile Criminal Justice System for the Children in Conflict with the Law that takes effect on 30 July of the same year, yet they failed to follow through on its various commitments due to the country's poverty and lack of adequate resources stemmed to the government's systematic corruption.

In the Philippine context, Article III, Section 1 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution guarantees the right to life, liberty, and property, emphasizing due process and equal protection of the laws. This protection extends to children involved in offenses within the jurisdiction of the Philippines. The principle of equal protection mandates the fair treatment of all individuals in contact with the criminal judicial system, irrespective of age. Therefore, minors engaged in illegal actions possess an unequivocal right to due process, ensuring fair treatment, legal representation, a fair trial, and protection from arbitrary or abusive measures by law enforcement or the court. To implement the mandate stipulated in the 1987 Constitution of the Philippines, the Republic Act No. 9344, also known as the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006, was enacted, which deals with Children at Risk (CAR) and Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL). A law or regulation enacted and institutionalized to promote the welfare of the children and their families, which involves parents and guardians in promoting diversion, preventing liberty infringement, and safeguarding children's rights to privacy, as amended by Republic Act No. 10630 children who are in conflict with the law receive specific programs designed to divert them from going through the juvenile justice system.

Despite legislative amendments, the prevailing negative public perception of the law persists, exacerbated by the increasing frequency of cases involving youth offenders, the escalating severity of offenses, and the rising number of repeater CICL. This sentiment is further underscored by the establishment of Bahay Pag-Asa by local government units, which aims to reinforce the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council (JJWC). The 2017 Comprehensive National Juvenile Intervention Program covering 2018-2022 indicates that, despite the regulations of R.A. No. 9344, some children who have come in conflict with the law are still housed in regular detention centers along with adult inmates. This is attributed to the absence of dedicated local shelters and practitioners for CICLs, highlighting a gap in implementation.

Background of the Study - The Philippines is a nation of children, children under 15-18, with almost 41,929,312 in population. According to UNICEF, in 2023, the Philippines had a total population of 117,337,368. Quezon is a province in the Philippines situated in the CALABARZON region occupying the central section of Luzon, characterized by its diversity of communities and unique social environment; its population, as determined by the 2020 Census, was 1,950,459. This represented 12.04% of the total population of the CALABARZON region, 3.14% of the overall population of the Luzon Island group, with 624,499 persons (32.1 percent) under 15 years of age “young defendants”

The municipality of Lucban, with a population of 53,091 according to the 2020 Census of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), is one of the municipalities in Quezon Province that has an established shelter and programs for CICL and CAR. Similarly, the City of Lucena, the only highly urbanized city in Region IV-A CALABARZON, has a total population of 278,924, also according to the 2020 Census of PSA. Based on the aforementioned data, it is undeniable that these two areas have a high number of CICL and CAR cases due to various factors and circumstances, such as rapid modernization driven by globalization, rising cost of goods, family status, relationship dynamics, and experiences, among others.

One of the biggest issues that society is facing today is the continuously rising crime rates committed by children. The perpetrator may be wholly blamed for committing such crimes and condemned for engaging in the act. Yet, one could counter that such people resort to criminal activity to survive and fulfill their necessities. Several programs addressing juvenile delinquency, notably highlighted in RA No. 9344, include the diversion and intervention program. As a praxis, several countries are still mistreating children in ways that are denounced explicitly in the doctrines. How to effectively and efficiently implement the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act (JJWA) is a dilemma for the Philippines, which has led to an ineffective juvenile justice system and a displeased society. These problems tend to involve poor administration, scarcity in sources of finance, a lack of public conceptual understanding, failure to adhere to the law, and inadequate translation into action.

Despite having a relevant juvenile justice law, there is still an absence of a well-integrated approach and organized plan to address the diverse juvenile issues effectively. Thus, the gap between this research and other published research will focus on analysing the demographic distribution and experiences of children in conflict with the law (CICL). The demographic distribution of the CICL plays a vital role in analyzing the contemporary and prevailing issues that lay beyond our knowledge. Furthermore, through the perspective of law enforcers and social workers, we can analyze the CICL experience on the one hand and the law enforcers and social workers on the Juvenile Justice System on the other hand that can cultivate and enhance the execution of the Juvenile Justice System of the Philippines.

Objectives of the Study - This study aims to analyze the demographic distribution and experiences of the Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) as perceived by law enforcers and social workers in selected towns in Quezon Province. Specifically, the study seeks to determine if there is an increase or decrease in the number of Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) in selected towns in Quezon Province through the official records for 2020 to 2022; To look into the demographic distribution of Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) in selected towns in Quezon Province through the official records for the years 2020 to 2022 in terms of age, sex, and place of Origin; To analyze the experiences of CICL as perceived by law enforcers and social workers in terms of the root causes, the effects of the causes and the gaps, lapses, and challenges; and to identify the government and other institutions' support provided for CICL

Significance of the Study - This study analyses the demographic distribution and experiences of CICL in Quezon Province. The data, analysis, and conclusion provided are beneficial to the following: Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council. The study may shed light on a new policy and enhance the monitoring and coordinating system of the council concerning other council members. Department of Social Welfare and Development. The study's findings can be used to build interventions and policies grounded in the latest research for the archipelago and specifically suited to the requirements of CICL in Quezon Province. Quezon Provincial Government. This research will help the provincial government of Quezon to implement various beneficial programs and projects for municipalities and cities with increasing cases of CICL and CAR. Local Government Units. They may develop different kinds of initiatives, mitigating strategies, and useful approaches for the CAR and CICL. Social Workers and Law Enforcers. These stakeholders can better comprehend the difficulties experienced by CICL and the kind of assistance needed for their recovery and reintegration. Children's & Human Rights Advocates. The research will help them continue advocating for the rights and interests of the CICL and CAR towards their complete development and transformation. Community Members. The study has the potential to increase public awareness of the significance of meeting the needs of CICL and fostering their

reintegration into society. Public Administration Program and Scholars. The results and the entirety of the study are important for them to gain a deeper understanding and knowledge in various fields of governance, especially in highly sensitive procedures involving children. Additionally, it will help develop their critical thinking and decision-making skills as future managers and leaders of the community. Future Researchers. Future researchers could use this study's findings as a foundation for further improvement or as a resource for similar studies.

Conceptual Framework

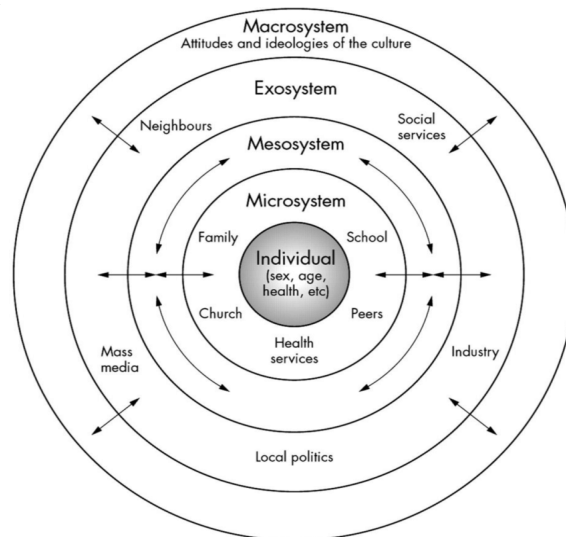


Figure 1. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System Theory

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System Theory argues that several interconnected environmental systems, ranging from the immediate environment to broader societal structures such as family and culture, have an impact on individual development. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding a child's development by examining the intricate network of relationships within their environment. The theory introduces the concept of layered environments, each exerting its influence on a child's developmental journey. Recently renamed the "bioecological systems theory," it underscores the pivotal role of a child's biology as a primary environmental factor shaping their development. Furthermore, the theory emphasizes the dynamic interaction between a child's maturing biology, immediate family and community environment, and the broader societal landscape. Importantly, any changes or conflicts within one layer are not isolated but have ripple effects throughout other layers. To truly grasp a child's development, researchers and practitioners must examine the child and their immediate surroundings and the dynamic interactions of the larger environment. This holistic perspective acknowledges the complexity and interconnectedness of factors influencing a child's growth and underscores the need for a comprehensive approach to studying child development.

2. Methods

Research Locale - This study was conducted in the City of Lucena and Municipality of Lucban, Province of Quezon. The former has thirty-two (32) official barangays, and the latter has thirty-three (33) subdivided barangays. The location was chosen for the following reasons: (1) both Lucban and Lucena City have programs for CICL, (2) to assess the initiatives and projects for the safety and security of children in the Local Government Unit of Lucban and City Government of Lucena, (3) the roles and perspective of duty-bearers such as the Philippine National Police (PNP)-Women and Children Protection Division personnel and the social workers from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in the respective city and municipality in implementing the Republic Act no. 9344 or the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006.

Informants - The study "The Demographic Distribution and Experiences of Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL): An Anlysis" included a total of two (2) Registered Social Workers, one (1) from Lucena City and one

(1) from Municipality of Lucban and a total of two (2) Philippine National Police-Women and Children Protection Division personnel, one (1) from Lucena City and one (1) from Municipality of Lucban. In analyzing the demographic distribution and experiences of children in conflict with the law (CICL), the researcher conducted an interview that required careful planning and selection of informants who handled cases of CICL through a referral. Along with the interview, official records and documents containing the age, sex at birth, and place of origin were presented and given to the researchers by the informants.

Research Design - The study utilized a qualitative-descriptive phenomenological design to explore and describe the demographic distribution and experiences of the CICL as perceived by the duty-bearers. Moreover, this is an area where this design is the most appropriate since it explores the shared experiences of social workers and PNP-WCPD personnel handling CICL cases, which generate some degree of understanding and enable sense-making about the demographic distribution and experiences of CICL. The phenomenological approach corresponded to Lester's (1999) concept, which aimed to illuminate specific situations and identify phenomena from the standpoints of the research key informants. Through the exploratory qualitative approach, the researchers gained a more profound knowledge of subjects or conditions that were imprecise and not precisely defined.

Research Instrument - The researcher utilized a documentary analysis and a self-structured interview guide. A self-made interview guide is a guide specifically created for informants to complete while the researcher serves as an interviewer. On the other hand, documentary analysis is utilized to collect the data and information of the CICL in terms of their age, sex at birth, and place of origin based on official office records. The documentary analysis examined confidential lists of Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) under police investigation and monitoring, as well as those undergoing community-based rehabilitation programs by the Municipal Social Worker Development (MSWD) and City Social Welfare Development (CSWD). This scrutiny analyzed the application of laws, rules, regulations, departmental policies, and intervention programs relevant to delinquency assessment in the Philippines. It assessed how effectively these instruments are implemented in managing and rehabilitating CICL, ensuring compliance with legal frameworks, and fostering the overall well-being of the youth involved in the justice system.

Data Collection - The data-gathering procedure employed in the study consists of the following steps: The researcher created a self-structured interview guide, and the research instrument underwent language and grammar criticism by the persons in authority with the subject. The researchers sought approval from the research adviser, the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC). They wrote a letter to the Municipality of Lucban, the City of Lucena and the Lucena Chief of Police asking for permission to allow them to have the data of the CICL cases for the years 2020 to 2022 based on the official record and another letter of request for an interview for the personnel handling CICL in the local. After approval, the researchers conducted an interview with the informants. As part of the interview guide, informed consent is secured first by assuring them that the data collected will remain confidential. The researcher interviewed the informants to deepen their grasp of the context. After conducting the study, the data gathered was carefully transcribed, interpreted, and organized based on the objectives of the study. All data gathered is treated with utmost confidentiality, especially considering the topic's sensitive nature, and the researchers abide by all the provisions stipulated in RA 10173 or the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

Data Analysis - Thematic analysis was used to analyze the findings. Thematic analysis is a method of qualitative data analysis used to identify, analyze, and report patterns (themes) within a dataset. Thematic analysis is a flexible approach that can be applied to numerous types of research. Firstly, it is adaptable to a broad spectrum of research inquiries, spanning from investigations into individuals' experiences and perceptions to inquiries about how particular phenomena are depicted and shaped within specific contexts. Secondly, it can effectively scrutinize diverse forms of data, ranging from secondary sources like media materials to transcripts from focus group discussions or interviews. Thirdly, it is equally suitable for analyzing extensive or limited datasets, thus accommodating research projects of varying scales. Lastly, Thematic Analysis can be employed to generate findings driven either by the data itself or by established theoretical frameworks, rendering it a valuable tool for researchers across diverse domains. This approach involved six phases of thematic analysis. The steps

included (1) Familiarization with the Data, (2) Data Coding, (3) Searching for Themes; (4) Reviewing themes, (5) Defining and Naming Themes, and (6) Writing up. Thematic analysis is a flexible and systematic approach that helps researchers uncover meaningful insights from qualitative data and provide a rich and deep understanding of the subject.

3. Results and discussion

Table 1

Distribution of Children in Conflict with the Law from year 2020-2022 in Lucena City and Lucban

	2020	2021	2022	TOTAL
City of Lucena	51	66	108	225
Municipality of Lucban	12	10	7	29
TOTAL	63	76	115	254

Table 1 shows the distribution of Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) cases from 2020 to 2022 in: Lucena City and Municipality of Lucban. The figures provide an overview of the trends and prevalence of CICL cases over the period 2020 to 2022. The City of Lucena recorded fifty-one (51) cases in 2020, sixty-six (66) cases in 2021, and one hundred eight (108) in 2022 with a total of two hundred twenty-five (225) cases of CICL. These figures indicate a significant upward trend in the number of CICL cases: (1) 2020 to 2021: There was a 29.4% increase in cases (from 51 to 66). (2) 2021 to 2022: The cases surged by 63.6% (from 66 to 108). Overall, from 2020 to 2022, Lucena City experienced a remarkable 111.8% increase in CICL cases, which suggests escalating challenges related to juvenile delinquency. The cumulative total for the three years stands at 225 cases. The rise of the said cases may be attributed to the recently occurred CoViD-19 pandemic, and when the restrictions were lifted the freedom of the children was gradually went back to its natural ways hence they became vulnerable again to their community to commit unethical actions that can violate the law.

Unlike Lucena City, the Municipality of Lucban shows a declining shift in CICL cases: (1) 2020 to 2021: There was a slight decrease of 16.7% (from 12 to 10). (2) 2021 to 2022: The cases decreased by 30% (from 10 to 7). From 2020 to 2022, the Municipality of Lucban saw a 41.7% reduction in CICL cases. The total number of cases over these three years amounts to 29. Conversely, the declining trend in the Municipality of Lucban indicates effective community programs, intervention strategies, law enforcement efforts, and other socio-environmental factors that mitigate juvenile crime that the Local Government Unit of Lucban initiated after the CoViD-19 restrictions were lifted. Therefore, the study of Hodgkinson & Andresen, 2020 simmingly contradicts and is not applicable to the case in Lucban, Quezon.

When combining the data from both locales, a total of 254 CICL cases from 2020-2022 – Lucena City: 225 cases, Municipality of Lucban: 29 cases – the combined data illustrate two contrasting trends: (1) Lucena City: A concerning and steady increase in CICL cases, peaking in 2022, (2) Municipality of Lucban: A gradual decrease in CICL cases over the same period. The disparity suggests that different factors influence juvenile delinquency in these areas. The increasing trend in Lucena City could also be attributed to urbanization as they are considered a Highly Urbanized City, socio-economic factors, or deficiencies in local juvenile interventions. In contrast, the decline in the Municipality of Lucban is due to its effective community-based programs, interventions, and strategies.

In context, the Philippines has experienced a notable rise in the number of children in conflict with the law (CICL) over recent decades. The analysis of data from the Philippine National Police (PNP) over the past decade reveals that from 2012 to 2021, an average of over 13,000 cases were recorded annually. The numbers exhibited an ascending trajectory from 2012 to 2016, peaking at more than 20,000 in 2016. However, a subsequent decline ensued, marked by a 20% average drop in 2018 and 2019, a significant 36% decrease in 2020, and a substantial 51% decline in 2021. This decline is attributed to the impact of stay-at-home policies and limited interactions enforced during the global COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic-induced measures compelled all children, including those at risk, to remain at home for safety, potentially contributing to the observed decrease in CICL

cases. Additionally, the extension of stays for CICL in Bahay Pag-asa (BPA) centers, owing to postponed court hearings amid the pandemic, may have further influenced the decline in reported incidents. Recent years' crime records reveal that less than 2% of total crimes were allegedly committed by children, with over 98% involving adult offenders.

Table 2
Age Range of Children in Conflict with the Law from the year 2020

YEAR 2020	10-b14	14-b15	15-b16	16-b18	18-above	TOTAL
City of Lucena	0	0	3	44	4	51
Municipality of Lucban	0	3	2	7	0	12
TOTAL	0	3	5	51	4	63

Table 2 on the antecedent page shows the CICL distribution based on their age from the year 2020, the majority of offenses committed were done by 16 but below 18 years of age with 51 recorded cases, followed by 15 but below 16 years old with 5 cases, 4 cases committed by 18 and above, and 3 cases committed by 14 but below 15 years old.

Table 3
Age Range of Children in Conflict with the Law from the year 2021

YEAR 2021	10-b14	14-b15	15-b16	16-b18	18-above	TOTAL
City of Lucena	9	5	7	30	15	66
Municipality of Lucban	1	2	2	5	0	10
TOTAL	10	7	9	35	15	76

Table 3 illustrates that in the year 2021, the majority of offenses committed were done by 16 but below 18 years of age, with 35 recorded cases, followed by 18 and above with 15 cases, 9 cases committed by 10 but below 14 years old, and 15 but below 16 years old, and 7 cases committed by 14 but below 15 years old.

Table 4
Age Range of Children in Conflict with the Law from the year 2022

YEAR 2022	10-b14	14-b15	15-b16	16-b18	18-above	TOTAL
City of Lucena	25	17	28	38	0	108
Municipality of Lucban	0	3	0	4	0	7
TOTAL	25	20	28	42	0	115

Table 4 shows that in the year 2022, the majority of offenses committed were done by 16 but below 18 years of age with 42 recorded cases, followed by 15 but below 16 years old, with 28 cases, 25 cases committed by 10 but below 14 years old, and 20 cases committed by 14 but below 15 years of age. The data extracted from three tables detailing the number of cases per age group for each year. In 2020, the age group with the highest number of offenses was those aged 16 but below 18 years old, accounting for 51 cases. This was followed by individuals aged 15 but below 16 years old, with 5 cases. Those aged 18 and above had 4 cases, and the 14 but below 15 years old group had 3 cases. For the year 2020, the predominant age group involved in offenses was 16 but below 18 years, indicating that late adolescence was the most common age for CICL. The significantly lower number of cases in the other age groups suggests that the tendency to commit offenses increases notably as children approach adulthood.

In 2021, the age group with the highest number of offenses was those aged 16 but below 18 years old, with 35 cases. This was followed by individuals aged 18 and above, who had 15 cases. Both the 10 but below 14 years old group and the 15 but below 16 years old group had 9 cases each. The 14 but below 15 year-old group had 7 cases. Within 2021, the 16 but below 18 years age group continued to be the most involved in offenses, although the number of cases decreased compared to 2020. Interestingly, there was a rise in cases for those 18 and above and a notable increase in cases for the younger age group of 10 but below 14 years old. This suggests a possible shift in the age distribution, with offenses becoming more common among older adolescents and younger children.

Conversely, the Yearly Breakdown of Offenses for 2022 reveals that the age group of 16 but below 18 years old recorded the highest number of offenses, totaling 42 cases. Following this group, individuals aged 15 but below 16 accounted for 28 cases, while those aged 10 but below 14 had 25 cases. Additionally, the age group of 14 but below 15 years old contributed 20 cases to the statistics. In 2022, the 16 but below 18 years age group remained the most involved in offenses, with an increase in the number of cases from 2021. There was a significant rise in cases for the 15 but below 16 years old and 10 but below 14 years old groups. This indicates a broader distribution of offenses across younger age groups compared to previous years. Throughout all three years, the 16 but below 18 years age group consistently recorded the highest number of offenses. On the other hand, there is a noticeable trend of increasing offenses among younger children, particularly in the 10 but below 14 years old group. The number of offenses for individuals 18 and above peaked in 2021 but decreased in 2022. Based on the data released by the Philippine National Police for the year 2016-2018, the majority of the CICL cases recorded were done by children belonging to the age group 16-17 years old, at 53 percent. The aforementioned data from the PNP is consistent in nature since, from the data provided above, the majority of crimes and offenses in the chosen local area were committed by children aged 16 but below 18 years old from 2020 to 2022.

Gordon (2022) asserts that adolescents aged 16 but below 18 years of age start to develop their cognitive, physical, and emotional being. They start mastering abstract thinking at that particular age, but these skills are not completely developed. Within this age group, the ability to foresee consequences is not completely hardwired. Moreover, according to the World Health Organization, drinking alcohol among adolescents is a major concern in every country. Based on their data, worldwide, more than a quarter of all people aged 15-19 years are current drinkers, amounting to 155 million adolescents, with males most at risk. Moreover, this age group is at risk of drug-related abuse. The WHO emphasizes that cannabis or marijuana was widely used as a psychoactive drug among young people aged 15-16 years at least once in 2018. The use of drugs and alcohol in children and adolescents is associated with neuro-cognitive alterations, which can lead to behavioral, emotional, social, and academic problems in life. Overall, the data reveals an increasing trend of offenses among younger age groups, underscoring the need for targeted preventive measures and support systems for adolescents.

Table 5
Sex Pattern of Children in Conflict with the Law from year 2020-2022

	MALE			TOTAL	FEMALE			TOTAL
	2020	2021	2022		2020	2021	2022	
City of Lucena	47	58	95	200	4	8	13	25
Municipality of Lucban	12	9	7	28	0	1	0	1
TOTAL	59	67	102	228	4	9	13	26

Table 5 outlines the distribution of Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) based on their sex at birth over a span of three years (2020-2022) in Lucena City and Lucban Municipality, Quezon. From 2020 to 2022, the total number of youth offenders includes 228 cases among male offenders and 26 cases among female offenders. The data indicates a substantial predominance of male youth offenders compared to female youth offenders over the three-year period. In 2020, there were a total of 63 youth offenders, comprising 59 male youth offenders and four female youth offenders. In 2021, the total number of youth offenders rose to 76, with 67 cases involving male youth offenders and 9 cases involving female youth offenders. By 2022, the total number of youth offenders increased to 115, with 102 cases attributed to male youth offenders and 13 to female youth offenders.

The number of male youth offenders has increased consistently yearly, with a notable surge from 67 cases in 2021 to 102 cases in 2022. This represents a 52.2% increase from 2021 to 2022, suggesting a rising trend in offenses committed by male youths. The number of female youth offenders, although significantly lower than their male counterparts, also shows an increasing trend. From 4 cases in 2020 to 13 cases in 2022, this represents an increase of 225%. Despite the smaller absolute numbers, the rate of growth is notable. Throughout the three years, male youth offenders consistently outnumber female youth offenders. In 2022, the number of male offenders was nearly eight times that of female offenders. This stark contrast highlights a significant gender disparity in the incidence of youth crime.

The total number of CICL cases has risen each year, from 63 cases in 2020 to 115 cases in 2022, an overall increase of 82.5%. This indicates a growing concern for youth offending in the regions studied. In the research of Cuervo et al. (2015), young males are the common crime offenders. This is due to the hyper-masculine frame comprising notions of a real man based on performances of overt sexuality, the willingness to commit violence, and the limitation of subversive performance. The typical offenses made by young males are drug and alcohol-related abuse, sexual offense, murder, homicide, and such. Further, those crimes relating to property offenses are also committed by young males with inconsistent parenting. On the other hand, crimes against persons would be committed by young females, but this has a low rate compared to young males. Moreover, the developmental and life course criminology suggests the cause of crime dominantly committed by males is a result of a linking of individual characteristics, such as impulsiveness, with a person's environmental factors, such as their family, schooling, religion, and the way they were parented, including any exposure to neglect and maltreatment. Additionally, this phenomenon can be explained in a sociological frame through strain theory. According to the theory, life stresses can produce anger and frustrations that may lead to violence. The gender divide is explained by the evidence that men are likely to react violently to such strains. According to the theory, women are more likely to internalize their responses. Ultimately, the data indicates a significant and increasing course in youth offending, with male youth consistently committing more offenses than female youth, all of which underscore the need for targeted interventions to address this growing concern.

Table 6
Place of Origin of Children in Conflict with the Law form 2020-2022

YEAR 2020-2021						
	Lucban	Lucena City	Mauban	Sampaloc	Gumaca	TOTAL
City of Lucena	0	225	0	0	0	225
Municipality of Lucban	24	0	1	1	3	29
TOTAL	24	225	1	1	3	254

Table 6 on the succeeding page shows the distribution of CICL based on their place of origin from the year 2020 to 2022. These young offenders are legitimate residents of the city and municipality presented in the table. In the City of Lucena, two hundred twenty-five (225) young offenders committed their offenses inside the jurisdiction of the said city. On the other hand, the Municipality of Lucban recorded twenty-four (24) cases of juvenile delinquencies, one (1) in the Municipality of Mauban and Sampaloc, and three (3) in the Municipality of Gumaca. In the case of Mauban, Sampaloc, and Gumaca, their CICL has been temporarily recorded in the Municipality of Lucban since the municipalities mentioned above did not yet have a center or shelter during that time. Therefore, through a referral system and a decision made by the court, the five (5) CICL was transported to Lucban to serve as temporary shelters that can give them basic needs and care.

As for the context, the total population of the City of Lucena as of the 2020 Philippine Statistics Authority Census is 278,924 whereas according to the census, the Municipality of Lucban is 58,091 as of the year 2020. Furthermore, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority and National Economic and Development Authority, Region VI-A CALABRZON has a total of 7.5 million labor force and 4 million unemployed individuals from the total of 11.5 million population of the said region as of 2020. Of the 4 million total unemployed in the region, 1,244,000 or 30.1% came from Quezon Province, whereas 37,320 (3%) of it was tributed from the City of Lucena and 10,256 (0.85%) came from the Municipality of Lucban. As cited in the research of Kokoravec et al. (2022), it is undoubtedly that the crime rate committed by children, and the fear it causes in urban areas and highly urban areas are much higher than in rural areas. Based on the statistics published by Statista Research Department, in the Philippines, juvenile crime rates were particularly higher in areas with large populations and higher numbers of unemployment. As cited by Muhammad et al. 2015, from the American Psychological Association, socioeconomic stability is often connected to continuous unemployment and low incomes among the young, which can affect the juvenile to participate in criminal activity and commit delinquencies. However, in the urban-rural dimension, the rapid growth of juvenile delinquencies in rural areas is a growing concern that

the authorities should address. Therefore, in analyzing the growing number of juvenile delinquencies, it may be necessary to consider also the differences in access to basic primary services, commodities, and facilities for children and youth between urban and rural areas.

Table 7
Codes and Themes

Code	Theme
Parental Neglect	Tabalu Rasa (<i>Blank Slate</i>) (Root Causes)
Distorted Family Relationship	
Generational Transmission	
Experiences of Abuse	
Economic Status and Financial Problems	
Peer and Social Influence	Villains are Made by the Society (Effects to CICL)
Social Media	
Stigma and Labeling	
Community Dynamics	
Facilities, Programs and Services	Snake and Ladder (Gaps, Lapses, and Challenges)
Repeater	
Duty-Bearers	
Discipline and Accountability of the Youth	It Takes a Village to Raise a Child (Support System)
Government Support	
Basic Services and Programs	
Community Acceptance	

Table 7 on the following page highlights the thematic analysis process applied to the transcribed and elicited key concepts evident in the data. These themes and codes are viewed as essential to analyzing the demographic distribution and experiences of Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) as perceived by law enforcers and social workers in selected towns in Quezon Province.

The first theme, Tabula Rasa (Blank Slate), depicts the root cause of the problem of why children commit offenses. If we think about the emotions, character traits, and personality, were people born that way? Or people made that way as they are the product of our environment. What really made a person? Is it the way a person was treated growing up or are they pre-programmed to be in a particular way? Tabula Rasa says that everything about a person is the result of some experience that he/she had. Experiences make you who you are. All the things you are exposed to make you who you are. John Locke stresses “All the content someone knows comes into the mind through experience.” This means that a person is not born with innate ideas; a person is not born with certain beliefs, emotions, or personality traits. When a person’s born, they are not already destined to be in a certain way; they were programmed to just have a beating heart, but they were not programmed to have a particular view of ethics. The basic idea of the Tabula Rasa is that everyone is born as an empty canvas, with nothing painted in the mind, and experiences paints all of our ideas. The first theme, Tabula Rasa (*Blank Slate*), depicts the root causes and dives into the dark side of the problem of why children commit offenses. Under this theme are parental neglect, distorted relationships, generational transmission, experience of abuse, economic status and financial problems, peer influence, and social media.

The second theme, Villains are made by the Society, discusses the effects of the root causes. This theme includes stigma/labeling and community dynamics. The idea is that we are inherently good but led astray by society. Nelson Mandela captured this sentiment when he wrote, "No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, background, or religion. People must learn to hate." Similarly, Jean-Jacques Rousseau argued "Man is born free, but everywhere is in chains." According to Rousseau, humans would remain gentle and pure if not corrupted by the greed and inequality entrenched in societal structures. In this view, evil arises not from creation but as a consequence of human choices, particularly the decision to participate in society.

The dark side of force seduces people, and one great example of this is Prince Zuko of Avatar. The series begins with Zuko as the sole antagonist to the heroes. However, as the story goes on, it reveals the far more brutal framework around him. People eventually learn about his tragic origin and figure out that it was not nature but nurture, which made Prince Zuko into the villain he is. He is, driven, not driven by an evil plan but by the

desire to redeem himself in the eyes of his father and his nation. At the end of the day, Zuko is only seeking what we all desire: belonging and acceptance from our society and repenting for our past actions. His scars are a physical token representing the insurmountable division between him and his ideal being. He sacrifices so much trying to overcome it but the scar, like the past can never be erased.

The third theme, The Snake and Ladder, comprises the gaps, lapses, and challenges that are currently faced by the juvenile justice process and system. It involves, among others, the lack of budget allocation, facilities, duty-bearers, and the discipline and accountability of the youth. The Snake and Ladder serves as a compelling metaphor for the fluctuations in service quality within an organization. When the service provided is exemplary, it facilitates progress and advancement, like ascending a ladder. This upward movement signifies growth and overall success. However, the system is not infallible. When issues or failures arise, they act as a metaphorical snake, causing significant setbacks. These problems can impede progress and require substantial effort to overcome. The 'snake' represents the potential pitfalls and challenges inherent in maintaining high service standards. In essence, this theme highlights how positive actions and effective management can elevate an organization. At the same time, lapses and errors can swiftly undo progress, necessitating a continuous commitment to excellence and improvement.

And lastly, It Takes a Village to Raise a Child is the fourth theme. The phrase "it takes a village to raise a child" comes from an African proverb, emphasizing that raising a child requires the collective effort of many people. This "village" includes parents, siblings, extended family members, neighbors, teachers, professionals, community members, and policymakers who work together to create a safe and nurturing environment for children. In such a supportive setting, children can grow, thrive, and achieve their dreams with their voices valued and heard. The proverb is so prevalent in Africa that nearly every African language has a similar expression, such as "One knee does not bring up a child" in Sukuma and "One hand does not nurse a child" in Swahili. This proverb, which is the community's shared responsibility in caring for children, particularly those facing adversity. It underscores the idea that the collective support and guidance of the "village" are crucial for children's healthy development and well-being. The theme incorporates government support, basic services and programs, and community acceptance. It emphasizes the role of governmental assistance, fundamental service provisions, and community embrace within its framework.

Table 8 on the preceding page presents the first code discovered in the subject of the root cause, Tabula Rasa (*Blank Slate*), of juvenile delinquency. It demonstrates that neglect by parents is the primary cause of children's criminal behavior. Neglect, especially at a young age, has a substantial influence on a child's emotional and psychological health. According to the evidence shown above, their offenses serve as a means of gaining attention from their parents.

Family plays a critical role, especially in positive development, identity formation, and self-concept. Various researches prove that emotional support from family significantly affects adjustment and positive mental health of children. Moreover, family features continue to have a significant impact on teenage development, and the association between parental availability and control and late adolescent adjustment is well known. According to Legal Resources, parents' neglect of a child is considered a form of abuse. It is generally described as the failure of the parents or the caregiver to provide food, shelter, clothing, or medical care. It can also be the failure to supervise a child to the degree that the child's health, safety, and well-being could result in physical or emotional harm and injury. Furthermore, when neglecting the needs of a child could inflict emotional and psychological trauma to them that requires years or decades to get over. Furthermore, numerous studies indicate the detrimental effects of neglect on a child's health and development are comparable to those caused by other forms of abuse. Thus, neglect is most likely a factor in continuous offending since parental supervision, parental rejection, and family ties all play a part in explaining juvenile behavior issues.

Table 9 describes the second code of the first theme: distorted familial ties. The dissolution of a family has a severe impact on children, especially when both parents join separate relationships, leaving the kid in a hole

without care and affection. Without supervision, there is a great risk that the youngster would be exposed to illegal activity. This can sometimes result in the child being abused by their original parents' new partner.

Table 8

Experiences of Children in Conflict with the Law as Perceived by Duty-Bearers in Tabula Rasa (Blank Slate): Parental Neglect

	Statements	Location
1	Informant 1: Unang una ay yun nga yung sinabi ko na neglected.	Paragraph 46, Lines 1,2, & 3
2	Informant 1: Unang una, syempre yung rejection ng family at yung pinaparamdam nung family na sila ay pinabayaan na	Paragraph 84, Lines 1,2, & 3
3	Informant 1: So hanggang sa ano na, kumbaga, tatala wala naman na akong mapuntahan ako na lang mag-isa. Mag-stay na lang ako sa kalye hanggang sa makilala ko na ang lahat.	Paragraph 91, Lines 1,2,3, & 4
4	Informant 1: So, from then on, yung super nadiskaril na yung kanilang koneksyon kung kanino at sinong maggaguide kumbaga doon sila nagkaka-problema. Hanggang sa ma-expose sila sa mga vices.	Paragraph 72, Lines 1,2,3, & 4
5	Informant 2: Kaya sa amin tinitingnan talaga namin malaking inpluwensya or maliking factor ay yung responsible parenthood, yun yung number 1 talaga.	Paragraph 81, Lines 1,2, & 3
6	Informant 2: Kasi yong kalimitan sa mga ganyan walang guardian, kung may guardian man walang... hindi ganun kadami yung ini-spent na time sa kanya, or kung meron mang... meron mang... nagspend nga ng time wala namang makain.	Paragraph 214, Lines 1,2,3,4,& 5
7	Informant 3: Pero meron ding mga magulang talaga na nawawalan din sa attention, kulang sa attention talaga yung mga magulang na ... siguro may mga work, lalo na yung mga nasa abroad tapos yung mga tatay na may trabaho padin dito, siguro kulang sa pag-aaruga din.	Paragraph 25, Lines 1,2,3,4 & 5
8	Informant 3: Naghahanap sila ng attention... nagnanakaw nga sila para mapansin lang sila ng nanay nila eh... oh diba para... at least matawag yong nanay nila eh.	Paragraph 155, Lines 1,2,3, & 4
9	Informant 4: Lack of parental guidance...	Paragraph 11, Line 1
10	Informant 4: Ayun dahil nga.... yong magulang nong mga bata ay hindi... hindi ba sila nagagabayan or talagang yong hindi nila binibigyang pansin at saka... oras ang kanilang mga anak, ano... nakakagawa or nai-expose yong mga bata sa mga gawaing masama para lang makakuha ng attention mula sa kanilang mga magulang.	Paragraph 30, Lines 1,2,3,4,5,6, 7

Table 9

Experiences of Children in Conflict with the Law as Perceived by Duty-Bearers in Tabula Rasa (Blank Slate): Distorted Family Relationship

	Statements	Location
1	Informant 1: Kasi yung marital dispute ng mga magulang after maghiwalay, katulad ng nasabi ko kanina na naiwan pa siya/sila sa gitna, kapag pupunta siya sa isa papagalitan siya o kaya papagtrabahuin siya na ganyan ganito na sobra-sobra.	Paragraph 89, Lines 1,2,3,4, & 5
2	Informant 2: Pagkanaman naman,, ano yung medyo mabibigat na cases yun nadin yung pagka... ang family ay distorted ang relationship ng magulang, ah broken family ang term nila although wala tayong term na broken family, pero yun yung... common term na ginagamit.	Paragraph 76, Lines 1,2,3,4 & 5
3	Informant 2: So malaki yung nagiging impact or nagiging... tawag don? epekto nung hindi magandang relasyon within the family dun sa kung ano yung up bringing don sa bata, yon yung primary.	Paragraph 78, Lines 1,2,3, & 4
4	Informant 3: Yes... lagi lagi ... always naman na nag-start yan ay sa family, kasi kung maganda yung pagpapalaki, hindi magiging ganyan ang bata, oo kung talaga nong start palang na-alagaan talaga or kung naguide, hindi.	Paragraph 27, Lines 1,2,3, & 4

The association between family structure and delinquency has been widely researched in various professions. Because of the negative implications of parental divorce, some experts believe that experiencing parental divorce in childhood or adolescence may be related to adjustment and behavioral difficulties, including criminal activity, for the rest of one's life. Juvenile delinquents are typically from dysfunctional households with distorted family relationships, and their own families introduce their delinquent conduct. Dysfunctional family relationships are a major factor in Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) leading to social, emotional, and cognitive impairments. Juvenile delinquency is commonly seen as behavioral outcomes that are influenced by risk and protective factors, with social support from the family being crucial.

On a broader perspective, various theories also explain this particular phenomenon. According to control

theory, parental divorce weakens the ties between parents and their children, increasing the risk that youngsters would engage in delinquent conduct. Similarly, removing a parent from the family limits the parents' capacity to exert direct control over their children's conduct, allowing the youngsters to engage in deviant behavior. Social learning theory may potentially explain the association between parental divorce and juvenile criminality, as children from divorced households may spend more time socializing with delinquent classmates due to lower levels of parental monitoring. The strain hypothesis, on the other hand, more closely aligned with the family conflict argument, contends that parental divorce exposes children to strain, increasing the possibility that they would engage in deviant conduct. Indeed, family, particularly family functioning was highly associated with an individual's delinquent conduct.

Table 10

Experiences of Children in Conflict with the Law as Perceived by Duty-Bearers in Tabula Rasa (Blank Slate): Generational Transmission

Statements	Location
1 Informant 1: Tapos ay yung mga low education ng parents.	Paragraph 74, Lines 1 & 2
2 Informant 2: Kaya lagi ang... lagi yang nagboboil down kung sa sino yung figure mo, sino yung... guardian mo	Paragraph 213, Lines 1 & 2
3 Informant 3: May ilan na ganon din ang tatay nila... kung baga naka... dating nakakulong din yong tatay nila.	Paragraph 158, Lines 1 & 2
4 Informant 3: Yun yong ano na.... "oh... nasan ang tatay mo?" "nakakulong po" "anong kaso?" "eh nagnakaw po" oh...kung baga ano... parang patterned ba kung ano ginagawa ng tatay.	Paragraph 159, Lines 1,2,3, &4
5 Informant 3: Minsan naman tayo naman judgemental diba, aminin man natin judgemental tayo... kung anong gawang puno sya ang bunga. (Generational Transmission)	Paragraph 168, Lines 1,2, & 3

Table 10 on the previous page offers data on generational transmission, which is characterized as the third code of the first theme. According to the findings, a child's growth is strongly influenced by their family history, practices, and parental participation. Sometimes it is claimed and shown that the fruit doesn't fall far from the tree, which means parents' behaviors can impact their children's outcomes. The transmission of delinquent conduct from parents to children is a complicated and detailed process that is impacted by various circumstances. The modeling of behavior within the family unit is a crucial contribution. Children observe and consciously or subconsciously learn from their parents' acts, internalizing patterns of behavior that may include delinquent behavior. This learned behavior might be seen or communicated on the acceptability of specific activities. According to findings from kid outcomes at five years (RL1), offending moms often had a high frequency of numerous risk variables such as socioeconomic deprivation and mental illness. These women were also more likely to have partners with mental illnesses or a criminal record. Moreover, children whose mothers are involved with the criminal justice system represent a high-risk population based on the data provided as a result. Therefore, disrupting the intergenerational transmission of delinquency needs to start early and target mothers as well as fathers.

Table 11

Experiences of Children in Conflict with the Law as Perceived by Duty-Bearers in Tabula Rasa (Blank Slate): Experiences of Abuse

Statements	Location
1 Informant 1: Nakaranas ng abuses yung mga bata.	Paragraph 88, Line 1
2 Informant 1: So sa abuse, totoo. Mayroong mga sexual abuse na nagyari between sa mga gay. So sobrang lalim ng pinanggagalingan.	Paragraph 92, Lines 1,2, & 3
3 Informant 1: 'Di ba? Symepre ikaw na yung nagiging subject ng bully. Lahat 'yan, lahat 'yan nakaranas ng mga bully.	Paragraph 99, Lines 1,2, & 3

Table 11 shows the fourth code in the first theme, about misuse. According to the evidence shown above, abuse has a substantial influence on children, leading to undesirable behaviors and legal offenses as a result of the trauma they have experienced. Child maltreatment is a pressing public health issue for a variety of reasons,

not the least of which is the harmful impact of early maltreatment on later social and psychological functioning. The extent to which early physical maltreatment leads to later hostility and violence, or how "violence begets violence," is of special importance. Retrospective studies of juvenile delinquents have repeatedly indicated that adolescent offenders experienced maltreatment at substantially greater rates than the general population, which led to their committing crimes. Different types of traumas, including abuse, are related to various levels of juvenile offending and delinquency. As juveniles, the considerable group of neglected children had the most significant rates of arrest for violence. Interestingly, abused and/or neglected girls were more likely than control females to be arrested for a violent juvenile offense. Early abuse or neglect may directly result in changed behavioral patterns, the effects of which may become apparent years later, despite being present during early life. Additionally, adolescent maltreatment was robustly linked to delinquency regardless of whether the individual had been maltreated during childhood.

According to the study's findings, maltreatment at any age increases the probability of future offending, meaning that expenditures in preventive and intervention measures throughout infancy and adolescence may reduce delinquency and crime. According to O'Hara (2020), children who were physically assaulted were twice as likely as the control group to encounter physically violent peer victimization, which led to delinquency. Similarly, Laetitia's (2019) found that sexually abused children had lower emotion regulation abilities and higher degrees of withdrawal and social issues than non-abused children. This can lead to them committing crimes more easily. In their study, Bentrup (2020) concludes that the data from their research demonstrate the suspected link between physical abuse and delinquency or violent delinquency, particularly for those who have undergone severe aggressive treatment by their parents. Even when alternative definitions and operationalization of physical abuse are used, the results remain consistent.

Table 12

Experiences of Children in Conflict with the Law as Perceived by Duty-Bearers in Tabula Rasa (Blank Slate): Economic Status and Financial Problems

Statements	Location
1 Informant 1: Ahhh ... majority ayy y talaga anoo .. belong doon sa .. ahhh poor. Poor economic.	Paragraph 20, Lines 1 & 2
2 Informant 1: So kung tutuusin, biktima rin sila ng sirkumstansya, ng saka siguro ng cycle of poverty.	Paragraph 73, Lines 1 & 2
3 Informant 1: Kulang ang baon, sa pinansyal. Pagpasok ng school mabu-bully ka muna ng mga kaklase mo. Paano ka pa mag-aaral? Paano ka pa gaganahan, 'di ba oh?	Paragraph 100, Lines 1,2, & 3
4 Informant 2: Ano.. karamihan ay mahirap below poverty threshold	Paragraph 23, Lines 1 & 2
5 Informant 2: Kaya mataas yung socioeconomic background, kasi... una yung dahil sa upbringing noong pamilya, na hindi... hindi makontento ang bata sa kung anong meron sya nakakapagnakaw sya or nakakakuha sya nung mga bagay na hindi naman dapat nya kinukuha.	Paragraph 202, Lines 1,2,3,4,5, & 6
6 Informant 2: Wala silang makain kaya nagbenta sya, mabilis ang pera sa pagbebenta, kaya nag benta sya, so ibig sabihin malaking factor yung socioeconomic status.	Paragraph 204, Lines 1,2, & 3
7 Informant 2: Kaya... imbis na ibili nila ng pagkain, na parang kunti lang naman yung busog, binibili nila ng rugby or binibili nila ng marijuana, so malaking factor yung socioeconomic status.	Paragraph 206, Lines 1,2,3, & 4
8 Informant 3: Oo below the threshold, poor.	Paragraph 21, Line 1
9 Informant 3: May isa pa ko jan experience na nagnakaw dito sa collar na... sabi ko Bakit nagnakaw ka? "ay ma'am sasayaw kami ay wala naman po akong pambili ng short" nagnakaw ng short "tapos nakita ko yung mga classmate ko nagbibili sila pero ako walang pera" nong pinuntahan ko yong family nya, actually dito sa urban yan eh, nakita ko yung kahirapan talaga	Paragraph 40, Lines 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8, 9,10, & 11
10 Informant 3: Kasi naawa ako don sa magulang, na talagang... wala talagang pambili. Yon talaga minsan yung kahirapan, yung gipit na... syempre yung bata naiinggit yan pagka di binigyan ng pambili ng nanay. Kaya sabi ko next time pag walang pera, walang baon... pwedeng pumunta sakin. Pwede naman natin tulungan magkano lang naman baon ng bata.	Paragraph 42, Lines 1,2,3,4,5,6, & 7
11 Informant 4: Lower class family	Paragraph 9, Line 1
12 Informant 4: Oo... dahil nga sa walang sapat na kaalaman or yung sa... proper education ba, sinamahan pa ng kahirapan na... yung miski makakain ng tatlong beses sa isang araw ay parang napakapalad na nila. Kaya dahil nahihirapan maging pati yong... ahhh bata nakakapagnakaw sya .	Paragraph 34, Lines 1,2,3,4,5, & 6

Table 12 on the following page displays the fifth theme of *Tabula Rasa (Blank Slate)*, financial concerns and economic conditions. Lack of financial resources has a big influence, causing youngsters to commit errors. Poverty does quietly devour people, when a child's fundamental needs are not addressed, they will seek methods to meet them, even if it involves engaging in crime. Some students are compelled to steal to satisfy their educational needs owing to poverty and lack of funds. Poverty has a high correlation with crime. People with low incomes are more alienated than those with large incomes, hence they are more prone to commit crimes. Furthermore, lower-class youth are more likely to commit crimes than upper-class youth because they lack immediate material wealth, social recognition, and social standing in comparison to the middle and upper classes; as a result, they engage in delinquent behaviors such as theft, violence, and vandalism to combat inequalities. Children from low-income homes, for example, may feel deprived if their fundamental needs are not met, and they receive less parental care and affection. This might have a detrimental impact on the children's personalities. As a result, such youngsters frequently resort to criminal behavior to meet their demands and please their egos. Overall, we discovered evidence that financial difficulties enhance the likelihood of delinquency and vice versa (Hoeve, 2016).

Table 13
Experiences of Children in Conflict with the Law as Perceived by Duty-Bearers in Tabula Rasa (Blank Slate): Peer and Social Influence

Statements	Location
1 Informant 1: Peer influence, seldom lang 'yan. Very seldom	Paragraph 94, Lines 1 & 2
2 Informant 2: Bukod don ay di merong mga peer influence, siguro parang secondary nayun.	Paragraph 79, Lines 1 & 2
3 Informant 2: Siguro kasi yung don sa peers nandun yung intimidation, nandun yung pananakot, yung force, na "sige wag mong gawin bubugbugin kita" or "paghindi mo binigay sa kinang" ganyan ganyan.	Paragraph 198, Lines 1,2,3, & 4
4 Informant 3: Ang robbery kasi napapasama lang sila don sa mga adult, oo... hindi naman talaga totally sila, kasama lang sila doon sa mga adult.	Paragraph 134, Lines 1,2, & 3
5 Informant 3: Ano siguro yong.... yong influence siguro. Influence ng mga adult natin dito	Paragraph 146, Lines 1, & 2
6 Informant 3: Kasi kalimitan talaga dito... kapag nag theft "Ma'am inutusan lang po ako" "nino?" "ay si ano po inutusan ako sabi kunin ko daw" "Bakit ka naman sumunod, pag sinabi bang tumalon ka tatalon ka?" Sabi nya "hindi, pero kasi po magagalit sa kinang pag hindi ko sinunod" impluwensya ng mga adult natin sa kanila.	Paragraph 147, Lines 1,2,3,4,5, & 6
7 Informant 3: Factor din yong influence ng barkada... influence ng barkada din	Paragraph 149, Lines 1 & 2
8 Informant 3: Kasi pag sinabi na.... "Ay ayaw ko sumama" "napakakill joy ka naman sasama ka lang eh" ohh...	Paragraph 150, Lines 1 & 2
9 Informant 4: Isa din na nakaka-apekto sa... sa ating mga CICL ay yung impluwensya ng mga... ng peer influence nga. Kasi nagsisilbi sya as symbol of brotherhood/sisterhood kung... na kung saan mas nararamdaman daw nong mga bata yong parang... belongingness parang sa palagay nila yung seguridad nakikita nila don.	Paragraph 32, Lines 1,2,3,4,5,6, & 7

Table 13 on the ensuing page shows the sixth code. Peer and social influence play an important role in a child's development, encouraging them to commit different infractions. Being at a time of self-discovery and seeking fitting groups, individuals may feel forced to do things, potentially influenced by peer pressure. In other cases, a youngster may unintentionally participate in wrongdoing owing to the influence of their social surroundings. Peer association is defined as a small group of people of comparable ages. Peers have an essential role in molding the lives of young people during their formative years. For example, when parents work longer hours and have less time for their children, they seek emotional support from their peers. Parents have been known to accept responsibility for their children's involvement in delinquent behavior. Adolescents spend more time with their friends and classmates inside and outside school. This explains why they frequently engage in violent behavior with their buddies. Because of their age, adolescents are vulnerable to peer pressure. They appear to believe their peers over their parents. This might be because they spend so much time with their peers.

Consequently, they are generally delinquent. As a result, they are in the cold hands of their peers, who

influence their behavior patterns. Peer groups have a socializing impact on juvenile misbehavior. Families have a critical role in socialization and the development of youngsters. Children are increasingly producing more networks of people outside of their houses. As Nivette (2019) cited, self-control is a powerful predictor of future delinquent conduct. Social variables influence self-control during adolescence, adding to a growing body of research on the dynamic features of self-control across the life course. Social factors, particularly peer delinquency, are also inextricably linked to delinquency, meaning that delinquency can result in cumulative disadvantages that further embed individuals in antisocial paths throughout their lives.

Table 14 provides the seventh code of Tabula Rasa (*Blank Slate*): Social Media. The usage of social media and other electronic gadgets has been shown to have an effect on youngsters. These instruments mold children's thoughts and behaviors, and they may participate in infractions out of curiosity. The internet is a massive computer network made up of tiny interconnected networks covering the whole planet. In today's millennial period, numerous innovations in existing technological gadgets rely on the internet network as a distribution medium and allow for easy socialization through its different characteristics. Adolescents from the millennial generation are expected to be more adaptable to the advancement of communication and internet technologies.

Table 14
Experiences of Children in Conflict with the Law as Perceived by Duty-Bearers in Tabula Rasa (Blank Slate): Social Media

Statements	Location
1 Informant 2: SOCMED, kasi yong iba lalo na sa rape... meron kami ditong case ng rape na ahh... 11 ahh... 8 at 9 or 8, 9 at 10 na ages ng bata, tatlo sila na nagcommit nung offense.	Paragraph 191, Lines 1,2,3,4
2 Informant 2: Tinanong ko sila anong dahilan nila, napanuod daw nila or san nila natutunan? napanuod daw nila.	Paragraph 192, Lines 1,2, & 3
3 Informant 2: Sabi ko san mo napanuod, sa peso net, so ibig sabihin while browsing the net... nakakakita sila ng mga ganung panuorin, confidential sya kasi ano yon eh parang isolated case.	Paragraph 193, Lines 1,2,3, & 4
4 Informant 3: Siguro dahil modern na tayo ngayon, itong ating mga... cell phone tapos yung social media isang... diba search lang natin diyan lumalabas na ang lahat.	Paragraph 49, Lines 1,2, & 3
5 Informant 3: Siguro curiosity ng mga bata na... "ano ba ito? papaano ba ito gawin?" nakakapanuod kasi sila ng ganyan siguro, o curious lang sila sa mga bagay na yun... kaya na gagawa, or hindi ko rin maintindihan kung nakikita ba nila... nakikita ba nila sa family or... through social media.	Paragraph 50, Lines 1,2,3,4,5, & 6
6 Informant 3: Kasi... biruin mo yung pinakabata natin na case ay 12 na maliit pa... na rape pa, 12 years old yong CICL oh... masyado pang bata.	Paragraph 51, Lines 1,2, & 3

The rising popularity of smartphones and the widespread use of the Internet among youth have introduced new challenges related to criminal activities. Contemporary young offenders leverage sophisticated technology for planning and executing crimes, utilizing smart means to escape detection. The prevalence of online interactions further increases the likelihood of youths connecting with like-minded individuals, potentially forming criminal gangs through digital platforms. Statistics from the World Bank and UNICEF reveal that 43 percent of the Filipino population has access to broadband internet. This widespread connectivity opens avenues for engagement with social media and smartphones, triggering the release of dopamine—a pleasure inducing chemical. This chemical response, akin to that experienced with substances like alcohol and cigarettes, is associated with notifications, calls, likes, and comments. While digitalization contributes to human innovation, unfiltered access to dopamine-producing devices presents a significant challenge, particularly in youth's mental and physical development. The development of pornography cannot be separated from the development of communication technology today. This kind of material can now be accessed through laptops, smart phones, tablets, and other digital devices supported by the internet.

Table 15 on the succeeding page explains the first code in the second theme, "Villains are Made by Society," which investigates the consequences of root causes and being a child in conflict with the law (CICL). Children continue to face stigma and unfavorable categorization as a result of previous infractions. This influences the child's psychological condition since it might lead to the repetition of their conduct.

Stigma is, by nature, socially dependent, relational, and contextual; it is based on what society constitutes as different or deviant. The construction and labeling of groups of young people as 'risky' initiates a diverse and dynamic social stigma process, which typically results in lowered life chances and limited options for self-growth. Acquiring a criminal record resulted in greater labeling, stereotyping, separation, and status loss, all of which contributed to structural discrimination. Adolescents with criminal histories discussed the difficulty of moving on from a past that involved criminal activity, as well as the challenges of shaking off the 'criminal' label. Most felt the label had tarnished them and that this affected them widely.

Table 15

Experiences of Children in Conflict with the Law as Perceived by Duty-Bearers in Villains are Made by the Society: Stigma and Labeling

Statements	Location
1 Informant 1: Kase ang nangyayari kasi, nagagalit na agad sila. Hindi naman nila alam ang nangyayari sa bata.	Paragraph 103, Lines 1 & 2
2 Informant 1: So ano 'yon? Parang ang nangyayari kasi, "ay kasi makulit ang batang 'yan, matigas ang ulo niyan" ganyan ganito.	Paragraph 105, Lines 1,2, & 3
3 Informant 2: So yung stigma nandon, na kahit hindi sya yung nagnakaw sya yung pinagbibintangan.	Paragraph 205, Lines 1 & 2
4 Informant 2: kasi yung stigma isa yun sa nagiging dahilan kaya nabalik, "wala na eh, yun na tingin sakin ng tao gawin ko nalang" parang ganon	Paragraph 252, Lines 1,2, & 3
5 Informant 3: Alam mo yong kahirapan talaga na.... feeling nila walang tumutulong sa kanila, na feeling nila mas... ibinababa sila, alam moba yun... "ay ganyan naman ang tingin sa akin magnanakaw, ay di magnanakaw na talaga" kasi yung image.... yong tingin nila sa sarili nila mababa na.	Paragraph 165, Lines 1,2,3,4,5, & 6
6 Informant 3: Kasi sasabihin nila "tingin naman samin niyan mahirap, magnanakaw daw kami, sira ulo daw kami ay di sira ulo nga naman na talaga ako" ginagawa nga naman ng mga bata natin, na hindi dapat nating gawin yun eh.	Paragraph 166, Lines 1,2,3, & 4

Table 16 on the preceding page highlights the second code for the second theme. Community dynamics considerably impact children in conflict with the law (CICL). For the reason that some members of the community are unaware of the concerns surrounding CICL, they may say things that stress a kid. Community dynamics influence the experiences and outcomes of children in conflict with the law (CICL), whereas, the local environment can either shield adolescents from risks or expose them to factors that may significantly impact their development and behavior. Furthermore, high-crime communities with restricted access to resources and opportunities frequently worsen CICL vulnerabilities (Lambert, 2017). In addition to that, Howell et al. (2019) found a link between community disorder and juvenile criminality, stressing the significance of understanding the larger social environment in which CICLs spend their lives. Furthermore, supporting community structures, such as positive peer networks and mentoring programs, have been highlighted as possible deterrents to delinquency among CICL (Sullivan et. al.,2017). The interaction of community dynamics and CICL outcomes necessitates comprehensive intervention strategies that address not only individual factors but also the larger community context, intending to create environments that promote positive development and rehabilitation for youth involved in the criminal justice system.

Table 16

Experiences of Children in Conflict with the Law as Perceived by Duty-Bearers in Villains are Made by the Society: Community Dynamics

Statements	Location
1 Informant 1: Community dynamics naman, mahalaga na mapaintindi sa mga komunidad na biktima ang bata. Sila ay biktima rin.	Paragraph 102, Lines 1,2, & 3
2 Informant 2: At saka yung syempre, widespread kasi yung availability ng drugs sa community, hindi sya controlled	Paragraph 207, Lines 1 & 2
3 Informant 2: Unlike noon, na and drugs hindi mo basta basta yan makikita sa kalsada sa kalye o sa ano, ngayon parang normal na hindi na sya katulad dati na secluded talaga itatago mo talaga, parang ngayon makakakita kana sa lansangan na batang nag rurugby na dati naman wala.	Paragraph 208, Lines 1,2,3,4,5, & 6
4 Informant 2: Kaya yung iba nga ano... yong ibang bata nakikita nila sa environment nila na ganun kala nila okay lang or kala nila normal lang.	Paragraph 209, Lines 1,2, & 3

5	Informant 3: Yong acceptance natin na nagbago na yong bata dapat yoon na... “bunso wag kanang babalik don, nabago kana dapat deritso kana hindi kana yong ano...” ay hindi minsan talaga judgemental talaga tayo... lalo na dito lucbanin buslog dito eh... hindi man ako lucbanin pero sa tagal ko na dito, 14 years kilala ko na mga ugali ng mga lucbanin oh diba?	Paragraph 194, Lines 1,2,3,4,5,6, & 7
6	Informant 3: Dapat ma-accept ng community, maibalik sa komunidad kasi hindi naman... law enforcement sa police lang yan eh diba? Irehab yan...lalabas at lalabas yan, iaccept natin na nagbago na yong bata hind iyong jujudge natin, acceptance siguro ng community.	Paragraph 195, Lines 1,2,3,4, & 5
7	Informant 4: Sa 1-10 na rate, ahh .. 8 ang community dynamics na malaki ang nagiging epekto talaga sa pagdedesisyon ng mga CICIL.	Paragraph 36, Lines 1,2, & 3

Table 17 on the subsequent page examines the first code in the third theme, Snake and Ladder. It digs into the inadequacies and issues that the juvenile justice system in the Philippines and Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) continue to encounter. Whereas it is highlighted that there is still a major lack of facilities, services, and activities available to CICL, it also underlines the local government's poor cash distribution, preventing those in charge of CICL from completely realizing its aims. Filling these deficiencies is critical for the juvenile justice system's eventual success.

Table 17

Experiences of Children in Conflict with the Law as Perceived by Duty-Bearers in Snake and Ladder: Lack of Facilities, Programs, and Services

	Statements	Location
1	Informant 1: ‘Yung support system unang una nga ay ‘yon, edi dapat well define ‘yung budget dito.	Paragraph 141, Lines 1 & 2
2	Informant 1: Kaso lang edi syempre, considering siguro na maraming priorities din, or hanggang doon lang ang inabot ng project dahil biglang nagmahalan after ng pandemic.	Paragraph 56, Lines 1,2,3, & 4
3	Informant 2: Ay ang una ay ang Facility. Kasi yung facility natin dito ay hindi sya accredited	Paragraph 100, Lines 1 & 2
4	Informant 2: Kasi yung ibang LGU meron silang facility, pero hindi sya naka-specified or naka... hindi sya specialized para CICL.	Paragraph 102, Lines 1,2, & 3
5	Informant 2: Kasi dapat talaga bahay pag-asa, yun yung malaking kakulangan ng... ng LGU at saka ng Province, kasi sa buong province wala pang may bahay pag-asa.	Paragraph 106, Lines 1,2, & 3
6	Informant 2: May budget na naka-allocate dito, actually malaki yung budget na allocated dito.... Kaya nga lang kase, anong uunahin namin yung budget ng pagpapagawa ng bakod or yung budget ng pagkain ng bata?	Paragraph 177, Lines 1,2,3,4, & 5
7	Informant 2: Kaya... kaya nga ang ano namin ay parang pinopropose na mapataasan yung budget dun sa food, kasi nga ahh... para yung ibang fund hindi naming magalaw.	Paragraph 181, Lines 1,2,3, & 4
8	Informant 3: Siguro dapat yong... unang una financial muna. Pag wala kasing pondo di mo magagawa, oh... buti na lang meron tayong shelter, hindi lahat ng bayan ng Quezon may shelter huh... isa tayo sa mapalad na magkaroon ng shelter bakit?	Paragraph 178, Lines 1,2,3,4, & 5
9	Informant 3: Kasi yung ibang CICL nila hindi nila alam kung san dadalhin, oh ay bawal sa police ang ano... 8 hours dapat wala na sila sa police, san nila titurn over sa provincial, kaya lang ang layo.	Paragraph 179, Lines 1,2,3, & 4
10	Informant 4: Siguro yong pagkakaran ng ano.... yong rehabilitation center na talagang intended for CICL lang.	Paragraph 51, Lines 1 & 2

The Philippines' Juvenile Justice System confronts considerable issues, including gaps and failures caused by a lack of financial allocation, inadequate facilities, and insufficient programs and services for Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL). Despite legislative attempts such as the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006, research indicates that resource deficits remain a problem. Herrero et al. (2019) found that enhanced budget allocation is required to execute juvenile justice programs properly, underlining the influence of budgetary restrictions on the quality of services offered to CICL. Furthermore, inadequate facilities and overcrowded detention institutions have been cited as significant barriers to CICL rehabilitation and well-being (Save the Children Philippines, 2018). The paucity of targeted programs and services exacerbates the problem, impeding CICL's overall growth and reintegration into society (Cesario, 2015). These deficiencies mentioned above not only limit the achievement of the juvenile justice system's rehabilitative aims, but also highlight the critical need for comprehensive reforms, improved budgetary assistance, and effective resource allocation to fulfill the diverse requirements of CICL.

Table 18

Experiences of Children in Conflict with the Law as Perceived by Duty-Bearers in Snake and Ladder: Repeater

Statements	Location
1 Informant 1: Yung mga oftener ay ang problema kasi ay nagmumula sa family.	Paragraph 70, Lines 1 & 2
2 Informant 1: Kasi minsan napapabayaang talaga sila, kaya bumabalik sila, may mga re-admission. So ang hirap non noh	Paragraph 146, Lines 1,2 3
3 Informant 2: Yon kasing 15 years old below, iniisip nyang mga yan di naman sila makakasuhan, iniisip nang mga yan ay okay lang kahit paulit-ulit ganyan "hindi naman tayo makakasuhan".	Paragraph 147, Lines 1,2,3, & 4
4 Informant 2: Hindi sya ganun kaeffective. Kasi kung effective sya ahh... kukunti yung babalik, kaya lang marami paring nabalik eh.	Paragraph 232, Lines 1,2, & 3
5 Informant 3: Kasi ang mga bata dito ay paulit ulit lamang, pagka...turn over sa DSWD syempre may intervention, may ahh... diversion program na ginagawa ang DSWD, syempre pagkatapos ituturn over mo rin... ibabalik mo yan sa magulang.	Paragraph 61, Lines 1,2,3,4, & 5
6 Informant 3: Pag naibalik sa magulang ganon na naman, babalik na naman sya... parang cycle lang ba, kaya lang bata eh hindi tayo pwede magsawa na, kahit ba hindi nakikinig yan ay sabihin pa rin natin kasi alam ko may natitira parin kahit kunti	Paragraph 62, Lines 1,2,3,4, & 5
7 Informant 4: Ang CICL ay hindi maiwasang ulitin ang ginawang crime o offense. Para bang.. ano yung ... hindi sila takot na gawin ulit 'yung ginawa nila kasi siguro alam nila na hindi naman sila makukulong pa eh.	Paragraph 24, Lines 1,2,3, 4

Table 18 on the succeeding page shows the second code from the third theme. If the juvenile justice system has shortcomings and weaknesses, it is unavoidable that CICL will reoccur more frequently. Similar to what was previously said, it is critical to improve the system to have a positive and more effective influence on CICL, allowing them to prevent repeat crimes. The recurrence of offenses among Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) in the Philippines' Juvenile Justice System can be ascribed to both structural and individual reasons. Limited rehabilitative programs, as shown in research by Herrero et. al.(2019), highlight the critical need for comprehensive and personalized treatments that address the different requirements of CICL. Insufficient community-based support services and aftercare programs also contribute to CICL's lack of enough resources for successful reintegration into society. Furthermore, the lack of a comprehensive strategy to treat the core causes of delinquency, such as poverty, familial dysfunction, and educational weaknesses, perpetuates the recidivism cycle (Cesario, 2015). The lack of mental health services and counseling adds to the difficulties experienced by CICL, jeopardizing their emotional and psychological well-being. Addressing these systemic concerns through policy reforms, improved financing, and the implementation of evidence-based interventions is critical for breaking the cycle of recidivism and promoting positive outcomes for CICL in the Philippine Juvenile Justice System.

Table 19

Experiences of Children in Conflict with the Law as perceived by Duty-Bearers in Snake and Ladder: Duty-Bearers

Statements	Location
1 Informant 1: Walang nagsabi na minaltrato sila sa mismong apprehension. Pero after several days, saka palang sila nagsasabi.	Paragraph 62, Lines 1, & 2
2 Informant 2: Pinusasan sya, meron kaming incidence na pinusasan sya, pero.... hindi na naming sya inano kasi yung bata kasi ay medyo wild na.. medyo sya ay anong tawag dun nanlalaban.	Paragraph 85, Lines 1, 2, & 3
3 Informant 2: So siguro precautionary nung police, although mali sya sinabihan namin ang police at mula noon hindi na mana sila nagdala ng nakaposas kasi hindi nga kami napayag.	Paragraph 86, Lines 1, 2, & 3
4 Informant 2: Oo, kasi meron talaga kaming nai-encounter na nag-aalleged ang bata na binubugbog sya ng police bago dalhin dito.	Paragraph 92, Lines 1, & 2

Table 19 on the preceding page includes the third code for the third theme. Table 19 offers valuable insights into the experiences of children in conflict with the law (CICL) within the Philippine criminal justice system, particularly focusing on their interactions with duty-bearers across various pillars of the system. The identified themes shed light on instances where the rights of CICL are not fully upheld, indicating systemic shortcomings within the system. Despite the existence of laws and institutions aimed at protecting children's rights, such as

law enforcement, prosecution, corrections, courts, and community programs, the findings reveal lapses in implementation and enforcement, resulting in the generalized approach in the cases of CICL. Furthermore, despite having already developed rules, organizations, and programs that are critical to growth, it was mentioned in a comprehensive national narrative report of a juvenile intervention system and welfare initiatives for the years 2018 to 2022 that significant gaps and barriers exist in the implementation phase as a consequence of a lack of respect, acknowledgment, and understanding, particularly among the local community the essence of the 2006 juvenile justice law is allegedly followed at the government level. Furthermore, the law's execution for the protection of children is widely recognized and enforced; yet, officials in charge of CICL have committed violations and failures in their obligations during the earlier conflict with the child. Therefore, addressing these systematic shortcomings requires not only rigorous adherence to existing legal frameworks but to ensure effective protection and rehabilitation of CICL within the Philippine justice system.

Table 20

Experiences of Children in Conflict with the Law as perceived by Duty-Bearers in Snake and Ladder: Discipline and Accountability of the Youth

Statements	Location
1 Informant 2: Lagi ko winawarningan yang mga yan, sige gumawa ka pa, lahat yan magpafill-up yan, at pag ikaw ay nakasuhan di ka na makakaprovision, sinasabihan ko ng ganun para hindi sila... naingganyo na bumalik.	Paragraph 149, Lines 1,2,3 & 4
2 Informant 2: Kasi merong kaseng mga complainant na hindi nagsasampa ng kaso, so yung mga bata paulit ulit din lang sila ng ginagawa na ganon, pero syempre di ko naman sinasabi na ganun kasi bawal yun.	Paragraph 151, Lines 1,2,3, & 4
3 Informant 2: Katulad ngayon yung karerelease lang namin pangatlong beses na sya,so nabigay na kami ng warning sa kanya ultimatum na kapag bumalik pa ulit sya dito or nag ahh... nakacommit ulit ng panibagong offense, dadalhin na sya ng... National Training School for Boys (NTSB) or mas kilala nila bilang boys town	Paragraph 159, Lines 1,2,3,4,5, & 6
4 Informant 2: Pero... malapit lapit na, pag yung mga batang yun bumalik ulit sa amin, saka kami gagawa ng hakbang na... na malift sila sa pamilya. Kasi hindi naman nila kaya, kasi kung kaya yan ng magulang hindi nayan mauulit ulit.	Paragraph 167, Lines 1,2,3,4, & 5
5 Informant 2: Nainhouse naman namin ilang araw natakas naman, yun may mga ganon kami challeges yun dito yung pagtakas, kasi imbis na dito sila inaabot nong... kung baga naprovidedan ng program hindi sila nakaka...	Paragraph 172, Lines 1,2,3, & 4
6 Informant 2: Kaya lang medyo madalang yung nagiiintervention program, kasi nga... di na sila bumabalik pag-inuwi mo na sila sa community di na sila nabalik.	Paragraph 224, Lines 1,2, & 3
7 Informant 3: Kahit ang case nyan ay rape, or ang case nyan ay robbery or murder ahh... hindi parin nila alam yung ginagawa nila. Actually hindi nila akalain na ganun pala kabigat yung kanilang nagawa, akala lang nila basta wala lang kasalanan lang.	Paragraph 37, Lines 1,2,3,4, & 5
8 Informant 3: Kasi pag sa akin... pag talaga kasuhan ko talaga pag 15 andano yan... masakit man sa akin dahil bata yan, wala naman ako magawa dahil gustong kasuhan ng nagrereklamo.	Paragraph 82, Lines 1,2,3, & 4
9 Informant 3: Hindi ko naman pwedeng sabihin "ma'am kawawa naman yong bata" sasabihin "pano matutoto hindi matutoto yan kung hindi mo aanohin, pagbigyan man natin... pagbigyan man yan" depende kasi sa bata, iba na kasi ugali ng bata ngayon, oo.	Paragraph 83, Lines 1,2,3,4, & 5
10 Informant 3: Pero kung talagang kinakailangan at ginawa talaga nya, at gusto panagutin sige kasuhan natin, ako kasi basta pa may kaso... pag may reklamo may kaso sakin, pero kung walang reklamo at kayang patawarin ay di walang kaso, pero tuturn over ko sa DSWD para macouncil.	Paragraph 113, Lines 1,2, 3, 4, 5 & 6
11 Informant 3: Kasi minsan don sa paulit ulit na ginagawa ng bata, kailangan nadin talagang matigil, malaman niyang mali pala yong ginagawa nya.	Paragraph 128 Lines 1, 2, & 3
12 Informant 3: Kasi kung paulit ulit na pagnanakaw, aba.... ginagawa na niyang hanap buhay yon... na dapat ay mailagay na siya sa isang institution, na maicouncil na siya, at marealize nya na mali yong ginagawa niya.	Paragraph 129 Lines 1,2,3, 4
13 Informant 3: Dahil alam noong mga adult, na kapag sila ang tumira hindi sila makukulong, hindi makukulong, hindi makukulong yong bata.... lalo na kung ang inutusan ay bata, at nahuli ay bata, oh diba...	Paragraph 135 Lines 1,2,3, & 4
14 Informant 3: May pagkakataon na ganun pag birthday... may schedule sila ng dalaw, tapos kung i-out patient nila dapat nandon yong magulang, kaya lang yong iba kasi tumatakas.	Paragraph 186 Lines 1,2,3, 4

Table 20 on the former pages displays the fourth code for the third theme. It covers the children's discipline and responsibility before to, during, and after the rehabilitation program. Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) must cooperate and be disciplined to improve their position and ensure their long-term well-being. Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) discipline, responsibility, and collaboration pose issues within the Philippines' Juvenile Justice System due to structural and individual causes. Herrero et al. (2019) study emphasizes the need for more effective implementation of rehabilitation efforts, such as those focusing on

character development and behavioral modification, to address the issues of encouraging discipline. The Save the Children Philippines study (2018) highlights how systemic deficiencies impede the development of a sense of accountability within CICL, restricting their awareness of the implications of their actions. Furthermore, Cesario's (2015) research suggests that limited resources and specialized treatments may lead to difficulties in building collaboration, limiting CICL's active participation in rehabilitation programs. To successfully encourage discipline, responsibility, and collaboration, the juvenile justice system must undergo extensive reforms that include better-designed rehabilitation projects, improved resources, and a more nuanced understanding of CICL's unique needs.

Table 21

Experiences of Children in Conflict with the Law as perceived by Duty-Bearers in It Takes a Village to Raise a Child: Government support

Statements	Location
1 Informant 1: Sa pagpapaaral naman, tumutulong ang shelter pero ang gastos nito puro sa LGU lahat.	Paragraph 131, Lines 1 & 2
2 Informant 1: Nakatulong pa yung monthly meeting namin mga BVAW Desk Officer	Paragraph 194, Lines 1 & 2
3 Informant 1: Organize ang mga barangay ng Lucban.	Paragraph 152, Line 1
4 Informant 1: Nanalo pa nga ang Lucban last year 'di ba? Second place National sa Juvenile Justice Welfare Community-Based. Panalo 'yon. Despite everything, despite sa lahat.	Paragraph 153, Lines 1,2,3, & 4
5 Informant 3: Meron din naman kaming mga meeting na... kagaya ko well trained naman ako, pero... nag coconduct kami ng mga seminar o kaya every barangay naglelecture ako sa kanila, para matutunan nila na pag CICL dito dapat iba blotter, pag CICL ito dapat ang trato natin, hindi... porket nakagawa sila ng hindi maganda itatrato na natin ng parang criminal, hindi naman....	Paragraph 36, Lines 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, & 7
6 Informant 3: Ahm... ina-assess din natin kung may mga hearing sila, sila... sila ate joy din ang naga-assess pati kami pinapatawag din ng korte, oo.	Paragraph 75, Lines 1,2, & 3
7 Informant 3: Kaya dyan kami nagfeeding program, nagift giving ng mga toys kasi na-aappreciate ng mga bata... kasi mahirap lang sila	Paragraph 117, Lines 1,2, & 3
8 Informant 4: Bilang law enforcer ... kinakailangan na proteksyunan namin ang karapatan ng mga CICL at suportahan ang .. ahh .. ang CSWD sa kahit ano mang plano at programa nila para sa mga CICL.	Paragraph 20, Lines 1,2,3, & 4

Table 21 on the next page provides the first code of the fourth theme, "It Takes a Village to Raise a Child", which emphasizes the necessity of various assistance required for Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) to traverse the juvenile court system effectively. Government support plays an important part in providing shelter for children under their care. Government and institutional assistance are critical to the effectiveness of the juvenile justice system. Adequate government funding and assistance are required to establish evidence based treatments and rehabilitation programs that address the diverse needs of juvenile offenders. Effective policies and resources help to build and maintain specialized juvenile justice programs, diversionary efforts, and community-based alternatives that adhere to restorative justice concepts (Lawrence et. al.,2017; Sherman et. al.,2020).

Institutional commitment to rehabilitation, education, and mental health services in the juvenile justice system is critical for promoting positive adolescent outcomes (Mendel, 2011). Furthermore, coordination across government agencies, social services, and community groups is essential for developing a comprehensive support network that tackles the core causes of juvenile delinquency and promotes effective reintegration into society (Huebner et. al.,2014). The role of government and institutional support in maintaining an effective juvenile justice system cannot be overstated, emphasizing the need for ongoing research-informed policies and initiatives to improve outcomes for the youth involved.

Table 22

Experiences of Children in Conflict with the Law as Perceived by Duty-Bearers in It Takes a Village to Raise a Child: Basic Services and Programs

Statements	Location
1 Informant 1: So, kung kaya ang lagi, ang social worker magre-recommend ng for the best interest of the child. Kasi kapag nabasa naman yung case study, nandon naman ang lahat.	Paragraph 75, Lines 1,2,3, 4
2 Informant 1: Merong rehabilitation program ang LGU Lucban. Ang rehabilitation program ay nagsisimula dito sa shelter ng Lucban.	Paragraph 109, Lines 1,2, & 3
3 Informant 1: May basic needs, education, spiritual development, at legal assistance, tapos ay medical.	Paragraph 127, Lines 1 & 2
4 Informant 2: Yong intervention program ay,, bibigyan sya ng mga services na akma or angkop dun sa nagawang offense.	Paragraph 49, Lines 1,2, & 3
5 Informant 2: ahh ano pa ba? yung diversion program yon na nga yong nakalagay dito sa likod. Yun yong nilalaman nong kontrata, ito lang yung para sa bata kasi meron din yung para sa magulang.	Paragraph 57, Lines 1,2,3, & 4
6 Informant 2: So merong mga services na, may mga program, activities na nakadepende kung ano yung nagawa or nacommit nyang offense.	Paragraph 61, Lines 1,2, & 3
7 Informant 2: Kahit na yung bata ang nakagawa ng offense, so still sya yung pinagseserbisyuhan namin or ng social worker na may handle ng CICL.	Paragraph 98, Lines 1,2, & 3
8 Informant 3: Ako sa rehab, sa rehab tayo...Yung para maprevent natin... kung baga maitama natin sila, kasi minsan yong... yong ginagawa nila akala nila tama pero mali.	Paragraph 80, Lines 1,2,3, & 4
9 Informant 3: May ano sila... may mga... yong sa pag-aaral pa nga lang ng mga bata, diba yong mga naandyan mga nag aaral yan, napasok yan, may titser yan, diba... may araw sila na pwede silang lumabas.	Paragraph 173, Lines 1,2,3, & 4
10 Informant 3: May mga programa na nakakatulong talaga, kasi kung naandyan lang sila... marerealized nila na "namimiss ko pala ang family ko, namimiss ko pala yung mga kapatid ko at nanay ko"	Paragraph 174, Lines 1,2,3, & 4
11 Informant 4: Ang rehabilitation ay ang aksyon o proseso upang ma-restore ang isang bagay at maibalik ito sa muling kalusugan at normal na buhay sa pamamagitan ng .. ahh .. ng mga programa at pagsasanay .. therapy.. mula sa dati at nakasanayan nilang gawi.	Paragraph 39, Lines 1,2,3,4,5, & 6
12 Informant 4: Among the youth offenders.. ahh ang qualified para sa rehabilitation ay yung mga involved sa paggamit ng ilegal na droga at pagsasagawa ng mga heinous crime.	Paragraph 40, Lines 1,2,3, & 4
13 Informant 4: Sa diversion naman, sa amin dito sa PNP Manual ahhh .. ito 'yung ahh .. kung paano hawakan yung isang kaso ng CAR at CICL. So ibig sabihin nito, magbibigay tayo ng mga alternative at .. 'yung mga child appropriate process upang maunawaan at matuklasan natin 'yung responsibility at iba pang ahh .. treatment sa isang CICL, na pagbabatayan syempre yung social, cultural, economic, psychological, or educational background, na kumbaga wala itong proceedings sa korte.	Paragraph 42, Lines 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8, 9, & 10

Table 22 on the ensuing page depicts the second code under the fourth theme, "It Takes a Village to Raise a Child", emphasizing the need for fundamental services and activities. These factors are critical for providing adequate care to children. Children benefit significantly from many services and programs that meet their needs and correct their wrongdoings. Providing basic services for Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) is critical to the operation of the juvenile justice system. Access to important resources such as education, mental health assistance, and rehabilitative programs is critical for meeting CICL's varied requirements and supporting their effective reintegration into society.

Research shows that educational interventions have a good influence on reducing recidivism among juvenile offenders, underlining the need for academic support within the juvenile justice system (Bradshaw et al., 2018). Meanwhile, mental health services are critical, given the high incidence of mental health issues among CICL, and effective treatments in this domain have been related to improved outcomes (Wasserman et al., 2015). Furthermore, providing community-based alternatives and family support services has been highlighted as critical for reducing recidivism and encouraging effective CICL rehabilitation (Abrams et al., 2017). Incorporating basic services within the juvenile justice system not only adheres to principles of justice and fairness, but also functions as a preventive tool, addressing underlying issues that lead to delinquency and promoting positive outcomes for adolescents involved in the court system.

Table 23

Experiences of Children in Conflict with the Law as Perceived by Duty-Bearers in It Takes a Village to Raise a Child: Community Acceptance

	Statements	Location
1	Informant 1: Mahalaga ang partisipasyon ng community. Mahalaga 'yon. Dahil bago sa amin, pwedeng sa barangay muna.	Paragraph 26, Lines 1,2, & 3
2	Informant 3: Hindi lang... hindi lang barangay, mga... concerned citizen anang nagdadala, ang nagrereport.	Paragraph 91, Lines 1 & 2
3	Informant 3: Kaya nga kasama sa ano natin ang community, na dapat tanggapin natin na nagbago na yong bata, hindi yong.... "ay nandyan na naman yong magnanakaw" ohh...	Paragraph 193, Lines 1,2,3, & 4
4	Informant 3: Yun ay yong tanggapin ulit sila ng komunidad, na pag ka sinabi na magnanakaw yan.... pag yan kaya natapos yang diversion at intervention na ginagawa ng DSWD, katanggap tanggap ba sila sa community. Dapat yun tayo....	Paragraph 192, Lines 1,2,3,4, & 5

Table 23 indicates the third code of the fourth theme, "It Takes a Village to Raise a Child", the community acceptance. In addition to the resources and programs available to Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL), it is critical that they feel accepted in their community. Acceptance from the community has a tremendous positive influence on these youngsters, keeping them from repeating previous transgressions. Various studies have highlighted the importance of community acceptability in determining the effectiveness of the juvenile justice system. The amount to which communities accept children in conflict with the law (CICL) substantially impacts their reintegration and rehabilitation chances (Abrams et. al.,2017; Bradshaw et. al.,2018).

In recent years, implementing restorative justice within the juvenile justice system has garnered increasing attention as an alternative to the limitations of traditional punitive approaches. Restorative justice principles focus on accountability, repairing harm, and involving all stakeholders in the resolution process. These approaches acknowledge that CICL often has distinct needs, vulnerabilities, and potential rehabilitation. Fostering community acceptability necessitates challenging preconceptions about Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL), raising awareness, and implementing programs to aid the reintegration of these children into society. The community's role in restorative justice is pivotal to the system's effectiveness, as it promotes rehabilitation, reduce recidivism, and supports positive outcomes for CICL.

4. Conclusion and recommendations

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn. Most of the informants are from the Municipality of Lucban and the City of Lucena, having 1 to 21 years of service and experience handling cases of CICL. Moreover, the majority of the CICL based on the official record revealed that most of the young offenders are males, with age bracket ranges from 16 but below 18 years old. Most of them came from the Highly Urbanized City of Lucena. The currently concluded research revealed that the root causes (Tabula Rasa "Blank Slate") that influence the behavior of the CICL are as follows: (1) parental neglect, (2) distorted family relationship, (3) generational transmission, (4) experience of abuse, (5) economic status and financial problems, (6) peer and social influence and (7) social media. The effects of these root causes (Villains are Made by the Society) on the CICL behavior are as follows: (1) stigma and labeling, and (2) community dynamics. The researcher revealed that there are gaps, lapses, and challenges (Snake and Ladder) within comprehensively implementing the juvenile justice system following are (1) facilities, (2) programs, and services, (3) repeater, (4) duty-bearers and (5) discipline and accountability of the youth. Lastly, in terms of the support system (It Takes a Village to Raise a Child), it was found that the CICL provided the following: (1) government support, (2) basic services and programs, and (3) community acceptance.

From the results of the study, the following recommendations were made: It is recommended that the Provincial Government of Quezon, through the cooperation of all the local government units, conduct a Parental Education Program and KKK Caravan: Kabataan Kontra Kriminalidad in every Barangay under the jurisdiction and political boundaries of each municipality and city. Intensifying the conduct of various intervention and

diversion programs for Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) is recommended to decrease the level of crime and offense repetition. It may be recommended that the local government units may consider allocating more appropriations to the Social Welfare and Development Office that caters to Children at Risk (CAR) and Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) so they have the capabilities to improve the facilities and provide the necessary needs of the juvenile delinquents. To consider fulfilling the mandate of the law, which provides that the province should construct a Bahay Pag-asa for juvenile delinquents under the supervision and management of the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office. This will cater to those Children at Risk (CAR) and Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) from the municipalities with no shelter and facilities. The national government may consider hiring additional staff related to the field of CICL to avoid the generic approach for the various kinds of juvenile delinquencies. Based on the findings as to the gaps and challenges in the juvenile justice system, it was then deemed necessary to encourage the participation of the barangays in the Monthly Training and Workshop in handling the CICL. The authority may consider imposing sanctions or penalties to barangay or concerned institutions, or at the very least, formulate a mechanism to ensure their active participation. Another study that will dig deeper into the underlying circumstances that need to be discussed relative to the juvenile justice system and Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) may be conducted.

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