Embodying the Promises of the People Power Revolution: Public Service as Civic Engagement among Millennial Officers in a Philippine City Jail

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Abstract

The EDSA I People Power Revolution (PPR) was supposed to overturn elite dominance as it championed the protection of human rights and vowed to restore justice in Philippine society. Thirty-five years since the peaceful revolution, how has the nation been shaped by this narrative? And how do millennials born in the same era that the promise of PPR has been created and shattered, carry and practice its values? Taking from the work of Cornelio (2016, 2020), this article unfolds the unexplored purview of Filipino millennials and empirically substantiates Arguelles' (2020) claims on millennial practices of civic involvement. In doing so, this paper interrogates the concept of 'public service' as a channel of choice by which millennials creatively contribute to worthwhile advocacies as a form of civic engagement. Specifically, this article analyzes viewpoints from criminal justice practitioners serving the country's jail bureau by framing the everyday practice of public service within millennial jail officers' notions of PPR's grand narratives and ways by which they value their service to the public as a contribution to preserving its heritage.

Keywords: democracy; millennials; prison sociology; public service; youth studies

Introduction

On February 25, 2020, Joey Concepcion, Vice-Chairman of the EDSA[1] People Power Commission, promised a grander celebration for the 35th Anniversary of the 1986 People Power Revolution (PPR). With the absence of President Rodrigo Duterte, the celebration only lasted for 12 minutes and was attended by 1,000 government employees (Gotinga, 2020). While there is an observation that mass commemoration for an impressive marker for civil resistance and democratic spirits has died down, the Duterte administration still hailed it as "a catalyst for the restoration of our democratic institutions" (Valente, 2020). In 2021, the commemoration was far from grand and public consciousness was focused on the prolonged COVID-19 lockdown in the country. There were no celebrations at all, which would have been inconceivable administrations ago.

In 2016, 30 years after the historical PPR, the controversial candidacy of President Duterte won the votes of 16 million Filipinos (CNN Philippines Staff, 2016). Duterte—a self-confessed mass murderer (Holmes, 2016)—boasted that he would eradicate crime and corruption within 6 months. Analysts were dumbfounded because Duterte's rise to power was a contradiction to the "post-Marcos Philippine...liberal reformism" (Thompson, 2016, p. 42).

Duterte's victory can be attributed to the failure of PPR to truly revolutionize Philippine politics (Bello, 2017; Curato, 2017). These failures may have tucked away the Marcoses from politics, but elite influence remained. In his candidacy, Duterte tapped the Marcoses. To return the favor, Duterte approved the burial of President Marcos at the *Libingan ng mga Bayani* (LNMB).[2] Marcos' burial symbolically confirmed that the dictator and his allies are still in power, revising history without

facing any consequences for the massive human rights violations (Casiple, 2016). Aside from his elite clout, Duterte's hypermasculine leadership (Gutierrez, 2020) also attracted the public who were tired of PPR's promises—narratives that further widened the gap between the rich and poor (Bello, 2017). For these reasons, it was not surprising that the exit polls of the 2016 presidential election showed that Duterte got the greatest percentage of support from upper and middle class, with 45.9% of the votes (ABS CBN News, 2016a).

What is more surprising is that Duterte got the most votes from Filipinos aged 18-35 (ABS CBN News, 2016b). This age group is tagged as "millennials." The high millennial voter turnout in Duterte's victory is unexpected for a generation born and raised with loud and colorful praises for the PPR as a civic movement (Cornelio, 2020). Millennials have always been thought of as ideal liberals, who persevere to protect diverse markers of democracy and are outspoken enough to put their politically-charged energies toward participation in civic culture (Cornelio, 2020). It is within this problematization that this research frames the following intellectual puzzles. If millennials are indeed these just and "woke" individuals, how has this eutopic vision translated to the win of a tyrannical Duterte (Curato, 2017). How does millennial liberalism resonate in their perceptions toward PPR today, specifically among those who are in government service?

This research investigates the link between millennials' perceptions of and learnings from the ideals of PPR and traces how these resonate in their choices of civic involvement. Although Cornelio's work (2020) maps out an array of creative ways of politically-charged lifestyle choices and involvements, this paper further asks if choice of professions, particularly, working as a public servant, relate to millennials' way of carrying out PPR's promise. Specifically, this paper explores the idea of PPR—its legacy and civic heritage—from the lens of

early-career jail officers from the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP).

The researchers chose BJMP as the institutional site of study for two main reasons. First, the Bureau is part of the Aquino administration's democracy project, which aimed to facilitate political, economic, and social reform by restructuring many Philippine government agencies. In this project, the criminal justice system is fundamental, within which the BJMP was created. Second, this research took interest among jail officers because of a peculiar finding in Nario-Lopez (2017), which divulges a nationalist tone on jail officers’ rationalizations in defense of emotional labor.[3] Jail officers take pride in the idea of public service as their contribution to nation-building (Nario-Lopez, 2017).

Review of Related Literature

The 1986 People Power as Contested Democracy: Importance of National Narrative

Delving into the idea of PPR warrants situating it as a narrative of the nation. The 1986 PPR or EDSA I overthrew the Marcos dictatorship, terminating his 21-year presidency and 14 years of martial law (ML). PPR is a product of the decades of struggle, with 3,257 lives salvaged,[4] 35,000 tortured, and 70,000 arrests (McCoy, 1999). It symbolized the start of a new era for the country.

Memoirs about ML and the PPR remind us of horrors of the past lest we face a future at risk of committing the same mistakes (Reyes, 2018). And yet, from Duterte’s rise to power and stance to “move on” (Adel, 2016), to the terrors of the regime being transformed to a “Golden Age” of the country (Abuso, 2019; Whaley, 2016), we see a perversion of these sufferings. Put

simply, "not only is ML traumatic—it still resists being narrated because, in the first place, the Marcoses have been allowed to return to power, benefitting from a lack of lustration" (Martin, 2018, p. 474).

Echoing Militante (2017), "[t]here has been a failure in our collective-memory making" (par. 3) and enhancing the nation's understanding of the past through education is needed to strengthen it (Abuso, 2019). Such is the importance of remembering the narratives of ML and PP, for a nation cannot peacefully forget nor "move on"[5] without recognizing history. To forget these narratives is, thus, an injustice to the survivors of ML, to those who fought for what the PPR promised, and to the Filipino people as a nation moving forward. It is in this regard that this research begins with the memories of ML and the movement that ended it—the PPR.

At the beginning of opposition-leader-turned-president Corazon Aquino's administration, there were efforts to institutionalize social justice through the 1987 Constitution. Several provisions on economic policies were made to achieve equality by acknowledging that poverty hinges on deeper structural problems[6] (Lat, 2018). But, while these were optimistic platforms, the implementation was stalled for a host of reasons.

The first reason why political liberation and socioeconomic progress was stalled is obvious —when the Marcoses left Malacañang, they left behind a USD28.26 billion debt used to finance infrastructure to pump-prime economic growth (Martial Law Museum, N.D.). Strong allegations toward corruption, however, disprove this as the Marcoses are also known to have lived sinfully lavish lifestyles. Pressured to still have access to the international market of contributors, Cory's term set debt servicing as the country's financial priority under Executive Order 292. However, given the country's very limited financial resources, this prioritization meant having to strictly

choose between development and debt servicing, with the latter having the bigger bag (Bello, 2008).

The second reason why political liberation and socioeconomic progress was held back is attributed to the further deepening of systematic favor toward elites, which is not shocking because Corazon Aquino was part of the Cojuangco clan. Arguelles (2018) went as far as arguing that PPR was only made possible by the outright support of the elites. Instead of upholding social justice by fulfilling the mandates for just agrarian reform, Aquino allowed the new Congress—filled with land-owning elites—to draft the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) that put the elites' interests above farmers' (Elvinia, 2011). Aquino only partially fulfilled her promise of making land available through redistribution of 6 million hectares of land, maintaining more than 2 million hectares of land ownership to the richest people in the country. In fact, Aquino's shareholdings of Hacienda Luisita were also exempted from redistribution (Katsiaficas, 2013).

Third, the number of reported cases of human rights violations increased further in Aquino's administration (Katsiaficas, 2013). One of the most gruesome incidents was the Mendiola Massacre, which started out as an 8-day mobilization on 15 January 1987 of farmers hoping to have a dialogue with the president (Serafica, 2017). Their calls were simple: for the government to redistribute the agricultural land which their families have been plowing for many generations, have zero retention of landlords, and stop amortization. But this peaceful mobilization was met by government forces with bullets, claiming the lives of 13 farmers (Serafica, 2017).

Lastly, PPR "lacked a revolutionary ideology" (Miranda, 1999 as cited in Guerrero, 2010, p. 181) for true democracy to be established, maintained, and practiced. What was instead instituted, according to Quimpo (2005) was a "contested democracy" marked by a mediocre republic that is

continuously challenged by insecure political elites, business oligarchs, and various political machineries and mercenaries. Contested democracy veers away from other forms of Philippine democracy, such as elite democracy and cacique democracy that focus on a top-down credit of Philippine democracy (Quimpo, 2005). Quimpo's argument recognizes that there is narrowness in "equality of opportunity between individuals and different classes, not only political, but educational, social, and economic opportunity" (Gillin, 1999, p. 704). Indeed, during Aquino's term, economic and political inequalities remained wide, hostility towards farmers and peasants allegedly worsened, women's rights including reproductive health were not forwarded (Mendoza & Lao, 2017), and a new set of cronies emerged.

Years later, Philippine society is still plagued with injustices and inequalities (Ross, 2011). As Bello (2007, para. 1) puts it, "the promise of political liberation and economic and social progress...in February 1986 remained just that: a promise."

The pursuit of justice requires remembering not only the failures of the PPR, but also its purpose from the view of those who sacrificed and fought for the people.[7] Borrowing from Halbwachs (1925/1980, p. 51), ML and PPR became collective memories that "deeply influenced national thought…" by being "a shared past...retained by members of a group" (Schuman & Scott 1989, p. 361) through cultural formation and commemorations (Assman & Czaplicka, 1995). ML and PPR as collective memories transcend those who experienced them and reach those who were not yet born then through records and celebrations. The preservation of such memories is important for a nation to continuously fight for political, social, and economic liberation and progress. In resistance to being forgotten, it is vital to turn to a generation that would navigate the discourse of

these narratives searching for democracy and justice in their everyday lives: the millennials.

Problematizing millennials in the People Power national narrative

Millennials were born in the 1980s and 1990s[8] (Cornelio, 2020; Stein, 2013). Millennial stigma is scabbed with their inflated sense of self (Twenge & Campbell, 2010), labelled entitled and narcissistic (Gillespie, 2014), and tagged as the "Me Me Me Generation" (Stein, 2013). Millennials, as claimed, can never be satiated and are always thirsty for praise. They are less empathetic and have less concern for others (Twenge, 2013). These characteristics, however, are only empirically anchored on Western societies (Cornelio, 2020). Thus, Cornelio (2016, 2020) contends that to box Filipino millennials into such a category and to attach these stereotypes to them without consideration of their socio-historical milieu is a dangerous endeavour. When "[describing] generations wholesale—as Baby Boomers, Gen X, Millennials, or even Gen Z—critics import such categories from the West and provide only one way of understanding reality by 'essentializing young people'" (Cornelio, 2020, p. 7). Being entitled, for example, is "...a function of growing up privileged…" (Cornelio, 2020, p. 7) and so, in a country where poverty reeks, such generalization renders a majority of the Filipino youth invisible (Cornelio, 2020).

Giroux (2009, p. 14) puts forward that the (mis)representation of millennials as self-indulgent can be traced back to a neoliberal economy that "[limits] the roles available for youth to those of consumer, object, or billboard to sell...other products." Instead of being considered vital social investments, the youth are merely seen as a symbol of commodification, and those who cannot assume such roles are considered disposable. However, as will be explored in this

study, millennials should be valued more than these stereotypes as they are capable agents of positive change.

Further, the view that millennials are apathetic is rooted in a "moral panic about young people and citizenship" (Roholt, Hildreth, & Baizerman, 2008, p. 4) but closer examination of this allegation unveils the instability of its assumptions. First, this apathy is illustrated through the "...neoliberal ethos that has shaped today's Filipino youth to glamorize social mobility and global competitiveness" (Cornelio, 2020, p. 15). Second, such apathy does not imply complete withdrawal from politics, but only in traditional forms of politicking. Millennials are vocal about their political views and are critical of the current political systems, and therefore not apolitical. These engagements are very visible online where millennials and other members of the younger generation sign petitions, strengthen public clamor, and communicate with elected officials and community leaders (Chu & Welsh, 2015).

The ways by which millennials entrench themselves into politically-oriented everyday practices show which causes they are willing to invest in and provide a glimpse of their groupthink about how they can contribute to social change. Relying heavily on Cornelio's findings that millennials participate in political action in new arenas they find affinity with, Arguelles (2020) compels readers to value millennials' "personally-oriented" politics as just as genuine as traditional forms of political engagement. Cornelio and Arguelles echo the earlier argument by Crepaz, Jazayeri, and Polk (2016) who consider "a vibrant democracy" as "an active citizenry that is engaged...not only via voting, but also via unconventional forms of political participation..." (p. 261). Hence, what makes Cornelio's and Arguelles' points important is the shift of focus in viewing Filipino millennials' participation and contribution in society from traditional forms of political participation to everyday seemingly unpolitical choices and practices.

With these conceptual refinements, this paper argues that active citizenship also includes daily civic-oriented practices among millennials (Roholt et al., 2008). This study follows the definition of civic engagement as how active citizens "...participate in the life of a community in order to improve conditions for others and help shape the community's future" (Adler & Goggin, 2005, p. 241)[9] as it calls for scrutiny of the root causes of structural inequalities. Civic engagement traditionally takes many forms, including voting, community service, volunteerism, and activism (Innovations in Civic Participation, 2008). Whatever the form, citizens' participation sustains democracy (Shaw et al., 2014). More importantly, civic engagement promotes youth participation[10] for continuity of collective action (Shaw et al., 2014). Through civic engagement, inclusive and deliberative knowledge is transformed into action, and action into social change (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002; Shaw et al., 2014).

The discussion on civic engagement, thus, warrants us to drop the views based on the outdated gold standards of traditional political participation. Millennials creatively shape their decisions, consciously decide on everyday practices, and orient their futures based on their political commitments. Taking on such a viewpoint recognizes the youth as citizens who carry genuinely visions of change in their everyday seemingly mundane life and in doing so, "we advance a shift in perspective from 'viewing' citizenship as a role or discourse towards seeing it as a mode of doing and being-in-the-world" (Roholt et al., 2008, p. 10).

To further understand Filipino millennials, the socio-historical conditions in which they grew up must be explored. After all, the sociological theory of generations would tell us that individuals belonging to the same generation do not only share the same birth year but are also "...endowed...with a common location in the historical dimension of the social process," thus

predisposing them a shared natural view of the world (Mannheim, 1952, p. 299). The generations of Filipinos born before the 1980s were marked by generational enemies and political movements such as Ferdinand Marcos and the PPR, the First Quarter Storm, and by World War II. But Filipino millennials neither had a spectacular moment nor a distinct generational enemy. Instead, millennials were raised in a "global atmosphere of euphoria" and "adopted an uneventful politics of good citizenship" (Arguelles, 2020, p. 35).[11] Although some may have taken part in the ouster campaign of Joseph Estrada and the post-presidency of Gloria Arroyo, what has become a highlight for the Filipino millennial generation is their being born and raised in a period where PPR's promise of equality and democracy was made, fought for, and then shattered.

The assumption that millennials is a homogenous group has been problematized and interrogated as a generalizing category in this research. Although arguments in this paper have been anchored on the work of Cornelio (2020, p. 18), this study treats "millennials" not just as a label to tag a cohort, but also as a name reclaimed by the group to which it is attached. Moreover, this paper aims to illuminate how Filipino millennials are involved in civic engagement, beyond consumerism-driven (Arguelles, 2020) and self-indulgent activities (as in Anacin, 2020). Thus, "millennials" are valued by this research as individuals who take it upon themselves to find avenues to activate and maximize the potential and prospects of their citizenship. Specifically, this study values Filipino millennial jail officers based on their capabilities for other-centered thoughtfulness and their orientation toward public service as their contribution to the larger aims of justice-building.

Research Significance, Questions, and Objectives

The effectiveness of PPR in truly revolutionizing Filipino society may be questionable but it is still undeniably an important reminder of the horrors of ML. Its symbols cherish Filipinos' collective attempts toward democracy and justice (Lat, 2018). However, the accurate and constant reminiscing of these accounts and its transference across generations rely on social institutions and artifacts; and examining the collective memory tells us a lot about how history is understood, vital in preventing the recurrence of human rights violations and injustices (Abuso, 2019). Therefore, interrogating how the PPR plays out as a collective memory is critical not only in making sense of millennials' concept of democracy and justice but also of the dynamic social, which could spell the potential for the millennial generation to prevent recurrence of ML atrocities and carry on the promises of the peaceful revolution.

Coupled with Cornelio's (2014, 2020) assertions to turn to "everyday authenticity" to widen analysis of the political involvement of millennials, this research also stands by the perspective that everyday practice is as important as grand political gestures because it is through this that routines, practices, and values are deeply internalized and carried as moral norms (Campbell, 1964). This paper expands further new sites for millennials' civic engagement—volunteerism, consumption, and digital media—where millennials have been channeling their political views (Arguelles, 2020; Cornelio, 2016; Fisher, 2012). Specifically, this study aims to strengthen the empirical anchor of both Cornelio (2016, 2020) and Arguelles (2020) by establishing a focal research objective to look into millennials' choice of professions as a creative channel for civic involvement and to take stock on the fact that millennials, whose ages presently range from 24-39, now belong to the working sector.

This paper examines how carriers of justice, considering their generational positions, perceive democracy and justice in the context of PPR, and how these concepts manifest in their practice of profession. This study delves further into the complexities of millennials' meaning-making around the promises of PPR from the purview of millennial public servants. While this paper focuses on BJMP jail officers, their case may be extended to the analysis of millennials as a cohort who are working in public service. From a wider purview, this paper demonstrates how millennials can be better understood and can make a case for new forms of civic participation. It asks millennial jail officers about the lessons and promises of PPR, and whether they translate, in any way, these lessons and promises to their daily delivery of duties.

Methodology

This paper looks into the viewpoints of millennial jail officers born between 1985 and 1996. They are the youngest officers serving the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) who fall within the generational category of millennials in the literature. From an Alpha List, officers who belonged to the age segment of interest were invited to join discussions about their view of the "promise of EDSA People Power I" and how they value these "promises" in relation to their delivery of duties as public servants.

Permits were secured from BJMP then endorsed to a warden willing to welcome research. Access was only granted for a single facility. However, this does not mean that profiles of respondents are homogenous—they came from diverse socio-economic, educational, family, and gender backgrounds. Because all of them have been assigned to various facilities prior to their duty in the facility site, they had a diversity of work experiences to share. Sixteen agreed and were available for the

two scheduled focus groups. Because of their age, most officers still occupied junior ranks. Only one officer-respondent occupied a senior rank, whose qualifications were strengthened by his training with the Philippine National Police Academy and a graduate degree.

Along with the observation of standard ethical measures of anonymity and confidentiality, the belated publication of this piece ensures that the identity of the officers will not be easily traced. Data was gathered in 2019. As of June 2021, majority of the officers who were part of the focus groups have been assigned elsewhere as part of BJMP's standard security protocols.

Focus group discussions (FGDs) were chosen as the primary method for two reasons. First, FGDs provide the opportunity for the researchers to contrast and analyze the many layers of shared, negotiated, and contested viewpoints. And second, for practical reasons—officers do not have much free time. Officers are overburdened and it would be too tedious for unit heads to change officers' shifting schedules for the sole purpose of this research. Through focus group discussions, this research interrogated the millennial jail officers' perceived promises of PPR, probed how millennials translate these notions in everyday practice, and investigated how public service relates to PPR's promise to restore justice. The facilitator was conscious not to steer the group dynamics and impose any preconceived thoughts or definitions in the conversation. The groups independently engaged in their own meaning-making activity. Lines of questioning aimed to invite reflections and interrogations of personal viewpoints via epistemic interviewing (Brinkmann, 2007; Curato, 2012). Texts were scrutinized to find dominant themes common in both discussions. Themes which rose out of the discussion are manually coded and thematically grouped for analysis.

To supplement the focus group discussions, secondary data analysis of Nario-Lopez's (2017) master's thesis on emotional labor among jail officers was conducted. Secondary analysis in this study follows Glaser's (1963) definition of it as "the study of specific problems through [re]analysis of existing data which were originally collected for another purpose" (p. 11). Following Glaser's (1962) guidelines on how best to carry-out secondary analysis, the following were first considered before utilizing this method: (a) comparability of the population in both studies; (b) similarities in the general research aim; and (c) comparability of the findings. With this study and Nario-Lopez's (2020) ethnography-inspired research focusing on jail officers, it was determined that data from Nario-Lopez (2017) can be reanalyzed and extended to this research. This and Nario-Lopez's study (2017) both aim to explore features of officer work that are overlooked and neglected—emotions for the thesis and public service as civic engagement for this research. Lastly, the thesis was used to enrich the analysis and contribute to the discussion of prison sociology and public governance.

Themes and Analysis

Inherited democracy: The promise of unity

When your workplace is perimetered by a sewage swamp where rats frolic at the height of the day, you and your colleagues are severely timeworn and outnumbered by detainees with scuffling concerns, it is tough to philosophize on grand concepts such as justice and democracy. This has been the sentiment of the millennial jail officers from BJMP. The discussion about the People Power Revolution, its promise, and how these promises relate to their everyday job deliverables started slowly—all mumbling words that they perhaps never imagined would be weaved together. The millennials started to

become more confident in speaking up, however, when their perceptions about the PPR was asked.

According to the officers, the PPR was a significant imposition of the people to reclaim their rights. Filipinos were able to show the world that through unity, the most potent and cunning of all dictators can be overthrown, said Tasyo. Filipinos were able to show the world that it is possible to overcome the severest of strains, added Juan. The officers were critical of PPR's character of unity, nonetheless. They explained that everybody then had a stake, which drove people out to the streets. The whole nation was tired of the tyranny of the few. The officers forwarded that it might be impossible today to achieve the same majestic account that Filipinos had from the first PPR because people now move out of their volitions only if the causes directly benefit them. Then, it is the most vital of their beings, the officers added, that was at stake–the Filipino people's rights. Officer Avrille added that it is not only human rights that Filipinos reclaimed in PPR, but also freedom. Freedom to choose the future Filipinos deserve, instrumental to and reinforcing of democracy.

Democracy, however, is a word harder to grapple with, according to the officers. They are very familiar with it as it is used widely in the depiction of the PPR in primary school, but they could not seem to pin down what exactly it means. Democracy, for most of the officers, can only be felt just as how a person's health can be ascertained with the absence of sickness. Democracy, according to their constructs, is the absence of corruption (*pandarambong*), unjust killings (*pamamaslang*), abuses (*pang-aabuso*), and exploitation (*pananamantala*). When these are present, officer Jake justified, rights are ostensibly desecrated, and people are deprived of avenues to participate in governance.

From the stories of ML that officers heard growing-up, the dictatorship was very inflexible and stubborn. You cannot

talk ("*Hindi ka mapagsasalita*"), officer Roan said, pertaining to freedom of speech. To officer Mark, not being able to criticize the government is a sufficient basis to qualify that democracy did not exist during the dictatorship. For the officers, freedom of speech is a firm indication of democracy; democracy will be hard to secure if justice and fairness are not dynamically operative in *all* government institutions and the virtues of our leaders and countrymen.

Democracy begets freedom and fairness to all: Social justice from the purview of jail officers

Shadowing the concepts of democracy and freedom are justice and fairness. From its Greek origins, democratic societies must ensure that all citizens have access to public office and discourse, and this is possible when there is wide acceptance of the law (Schejter & Tirosh, 2016). Social justice is an important tool in keeping a society democratic because justice is "generally equated with the notion of equality or equal opportunity in society" (Scherlen & Robinson, 2008, as cited in Robinson, 2010, p. 78). Raised in the promises of PPR, the pool of millennials shared that their decision to be an officer is founded on the idea that everyone must contribute to the preservation of democracy. For officers MJ and Juan, freedom and democracy are coupled concepts wherein one will not exist without the other ("*hindi mabubuo ang isa kung wala ang isa*"). Taking these officers' views to the theoretical realm turns us to John Rawls and David Miller.

According to Rawls and Miller, a democratic society is a "fair system of social cooperation between free and equal citizens" (Robinson, 2010, p. 79) where justice discourse designs social organization. In Rawls' theory of fairness, social justice is the "protection of equal access to liberties, rights, and opportunities" (Robinson, 2010, p. 79). Rawls here emphasizes that "primary goods" should be accessible to all: basic rights and

liberties; freedom of choice and opportunity; including the guarantee of social aspects for self-respect (Robinson, 2010, p. 80). Miller further points that because social justice is a virtue owed by citizens to each other, "justice requires us to treat people as equals" (Miller, 1999, p. 22).

In being an officer, the respondents said that they could secure the favors of democracy by warranting that freedom trickles down to all society members. Justice and fairness go hand-in-hand. Under the virtue of justice, said Juan, one orients their ways toward fairness, wherein fairness means giving what is due. The importance of justice for the officers should be brought to the wider landscape of the criminal justice system. Following Durkheim's view, the criminal justice system is vital as it keeps society's values intact especially crucial in unjust times (DiCristina, 2015). In times of conflict, justice serves "fair and impartial treatment" (Turvey & Crowder, 2013, p. 6). As they serve BJMP, the officers recognize that they become tools of justice. As Tasyo shared: we serve as instruments so that there is access to justice ("*kami 'yung instrumento para may* access *sa* justice").

Understanding the officers' view of justice must also be situated within the Philippine context and its criminal justice system. The PPR was what many referred to as the Filipino's rise from tyranny and restoration of democracy and justice. Through the movement, a constitution that sought to recognize the rights of all human beings and to uphold equality, justice, peace, and freedom, among others was born, and various systems and government institutions were established and reconstituted. Of particular importance to this research is the Philippine criminal justice system[12] and the changes in the legal and executive agencies that fall under it.[13]

Emanating from the 1987 Constitution, prison regimes shifted from punitive to rehabilitative ideals, and the BJMP was instituted to formalize the distinction of innocent (yet to be

proven guilty) individuals from those serving sentences (typically called inmates, under the Bureau of Corrections). Executive Order No. 292 renamed the Bureau of Prisons to the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor), signifying the paradigm shift in the bureau (Administrative Code of 1987, 1987). Following this change was the replacement of the Jail Management and Penology Service[14] with the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) and the reorganization of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) into different sectors of uniformed personnel under Chapter V of Republic Act 6975 (1990). Specifically, BJMP aims to develop provisions for the safekeeping and rehabilitation of persons deprived of liberty (PDL) who are awaiting investigation and trial or serving sentences of three years or less. It is hoped that programs in these facilities "cater to the behavioral, social, economic, cultural, and spiritual reformation" of PDL to help them recover and be reintegrated into society (Narag, 2005, p. 15).

As the former warden of the Manila City Jail, Col. Randel H. Latoza, said, "[in jails], the hands of justice work by allowing due process to take its course—we buy time to gather evidence and give opportunities for detainees to seek legal counsel and defend themselves [; it] is a buffer zone to avoid the prosecution of people who are innocent" (Nario-Lopez, 2020, p. 255). Such a paradigm shift in jails, thus, provided a change not only in the management of these facilities, but also in the role of the jail officer.

In carrying out their everyday job, jail officers are committed to protect human rights (BJMP, 2015). The officers' professional duties center on the mandate to deliver rehabilitation with great care and attention to the spiritual and physical well-being of PDLs (see BJMP, 2015). In 2019, this was further extended by officer-in-charge Chief Superintendent Allan Iral to a 4G service pledge: *Guard the Gate, Guard the Badge, Guard the Purse, and Guard the Life* (Bajo, 2019). Through this

pledge, BJMP ensures public safety by securing jail facilities with discipline (*Guard the Gate*); promoting professionalism to preserve the bureau's accountability (*Guard the Badge*); ensuring transparency and accountability in all financial matters so that funds are used to better PDLs' living conditions (*Guard the Purse*); and carrying out welfare and rehabilitation programs for PDLs' reintegration into society (*Guard the Life*) (BJMP, 2020). Although such precepts promote the development of the Bureau and its stakeholders, actualizing these plans is not easy.

There are many structural deficiencies present in the Philippine criminal justice system and the problems in jails are compounded. As officers navigate through the protocols of the BJMP Manual, they recognize that its creation comes from the perspective of those in power who do not see the daily trials street bureaucrats like them have to endure in day-to-day operations. It all sounds good ("*maganda pakinggan*"), said an officer, but without analyzing the limitations, weaknesses, and needs of jail frontliners, these protocols remain unachievable. The most significant gap the officers consider between the ideal jail standards and the actual reality experienced is the quality of intervention they can provide to PDLs.

As with all other problems encountered within the walls, the quality of PDL intervention in jail is rooted in overpopulation and its consequent effects. Regrettably, this is the core function of the Bureau. To further appreciate jail officers, it is thus essential to look at the struggles they endure daily to guarantee justice and fairness to PDL.

Whose failures? The struggle for justice behind jail bars

Though the 1987 Constitution gave distinction to the Philippine pillars of justice, a wide gap remains between the promise of PPR and how the BJMP operates. Where the officers are

assigned, the jail population abruptly rose from approximately 3,500 PDLs in January 2016 to 4,400 by January 2017, 5,700 by January 2018, and 5,850 by January 2019.[15] This rise is universal in all Philippine jails since Duterte waged his all-out-war on drugs (Nario-Lopez, in press). What is disquieting here is that Philippine penal facilities have been universally experiencing population congestion for decades (Nario-Lopez, 2017).

Studies that problematize the consequences of overpopulation saw how it creates a distinct character of Philippine prisons and jails (see Ashburn, 1965; Berdin, 1999; de Jesus, 1992; Gallardo, 1994; Gutierrez, 2012, 2020; Narag, 2005; Nario-Lopez, 2017, 2021, in press; Navarette, 1999; Nicolas, 1988; Solba, 1995; Toctocan, 1988; Valdez, 1995;). In a news report, former BJMP Chief Serafin P. Barretto Jr. recognized this perennial problem: "[w]ith only 11,731 officers and personnel on its roster, and only about 7,000 doing custodial functions, the BJMP is undermanned" (Tupas, 2017). In fact, for this city jail under discussion, 69.53% of detainees are charged with drug-related cases and the officers are placed in the position to see firsthand the pervasiveness of social inequalities in Philippine society.

In the city jail, despite the increasing trend of the detainee population, only 181 officers share the responsibility. With these numbers, the actual officer to detainee ratio is 1:306 (BJMP, 2019). For a population of 5,000, the city jail should have 715 custodial officers to comply with the bureau standard of 1:7 officer-detainee ratio (BJMP, 2015). These officers are further divided into shifts, multi-tasking a variety of assignments. Since the COVID-19 total lockdown of BJMP facilities in March 2020, officers had to further divide themselves into two teams—"Team *Loob*" (Personnel on Lockdown) and "Team *Labas*" (Jail Response Team)—wherein shifts last for 28 days: 14 days for quarantine and another 14 for actual facility duties. An officer who was a part of this study, has been on duty for 15 months

straight because nobody else is capable of taking over his specialized duties.

Aside from being severely understaffed, overpopulation is also the root of many other problems such as (a) lack of space; (b) contagion of diseases; (c) poor nutrition and sanitation; (d) subhuman conditions, causing harm in the emotional and psychological state of PDL (Narag, 2005); (e) difficulty in the implementation of rehabilitation programs due to lack of space and professionally-trained officers in psychology, social work, and psychiatry; (f) high incidence of escapes, riots, and other jail disturbances (Berdin, 1999); and (g) transformation of first-time offenders to hardened criminals due to lack of risk-based PDL classification (Nario-Lopez, in press).

The prevailing concern among officers is that it is hard for the Bureau to secure funding due to the stigma on PDLs (Nario-Lopez, 2017, 2021). To this day, there is public sentiment that the government should not waste taxes on people who allegedly ruined their own lives. Some, such as former National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) secretary-general, Dr. Romulo Virola, even claimed that PDLs receive more than enough because they are allocated PHP18,250 per year in 2010—above the national per capita poverty threshold of PHP18,157 in 2011. "No wonder therefore, that some prisoners would rather stay in jail!" he further commented. Such an amount, according to him, is a “...high price [paid for by taxpayers and the government]” (Malig, 2011). BJMP authorities are sure this is not enough. In Congress, the Bureau requested an additional 2,000 personnel on top of the 500 afforded by their PHP11.6 billion budget to hire 500 staff (Tupas, 2017). Two years later, the budget was increased to PHP18.9 billion (Department of Budget and Management, 2018). This, however, was still not enough to meet the demands of high congestion rates, the need to increase the meager food budget of PDLs (Panti, 2020), and repair of facilities.

A salient dispute in the focus group discussion is that citizens outside the jail walls do not see why people commit crimes in the first place. From the officers′ standpoint, poverty is the axis of a perpetual cycle that subjects individuals to lack of education, lowly and insecure job opportunities, weak family relations, poor decision-making, and exposure to criminalistic tendencies. Worse, some are simply subjected to criminal profiling. An officer disclosed how some of the PDLs were ordinary loafers ("*tambay*") arrested by the police out of "compliance" to station arrest quotas. Although the officer did not clearly expound what legitimate directives the police were complying to, the officer-respondents mentioned that PDLs were charged with drug-related crimes regardless if the PDL was just idling around or had a more grave violation. The officers view this system as a form of systematized injustice.

Aside from criminal profiling, officer Jay shared his belief that insufficient access to opportunities lead people to commit crimes. Most of the detainees they man, according to the officers, have committed crimes due to poverty or low-paying jobs. As a result, they turn to committing property crimes, like robbery (*holdap*) to earn more. Officer Tasyo even said that *holdap* is their main source of income and their dignified jobs are sort of their sidelines.

Poverty too disparages detainees from understanding the legal battle they have to go through; most do not understand the gravity of cases that have been filed against them, more so the prolonged legal battle they need to endure. Most detainees are uneducated, unable to comprehend the legal edicts in their hearings that often come months apart due to the overburdening of courts. Most do not have the means to undergo fiscal processes to prove their innocence. Exacerbating this vulnerability among PDLs is the widespread shortage of public counsels. Overwork and unfulfilling caseloads cause the high attrition among government counsels. Most Philippine

attorneys engage in private law practice because corporate firms offer bounteous pay and prestigious perks. Some who still serve the government, transfer to judicial positions and the National Prosecution Service, leaving clients-public attorney ratio to 2924:1 (Public Attorney's Office, 2020). According to jail officers, most detainees do not even know the names of their attorneys and the status of their cases.

Across BJMP, the typical lifespan of a case is 3.2 years; it would take more than three years in a detainee's life even before he receives final conviction. This is more than the usual sentence for petty crimes and other types of misdemeanors committed out of poverty, such as shoplifting, theft, and robbery. At the worst, if the detainee chooses to fight for appeal, it can take up to almost 10-15 years before the final decision in higher courts is made (Narag, 2005). It is regrettable to see a person's life waste away while waiting for justice to be served, according to one officer. Injustices are more pronounced for the incarcerated because it is harder for them to be redeemed from social stigma. Officer Jake explained that the rejection and judgment from the community lead a common PDL to believe that they are indeed useless (*inutil*) members of society. Despite efforts to achieve meaningful relations and dignified employment, incarcerated individuals are not trusted and hired in gainful employment, leading them to repeatedly commit crimes. This reality shows, as officer Jay puts it, that the meaning of justice is diminished because of the impediments to having a dignified life inside and even outside the jail.

With unconducive facilities and an overall insufficient budget, jail officers are compelled to find their own solutions to ensure that the needs of PDLs are met and their rights upheld. As one officer shared in Nario-Lopez's (2017) research, "...because the National Government and even BJMP [know] that [jail officers] survive anyway with the little they have, the responsibility of making-up for the deficit is left to them" (p.

138). Officers have no choice but to rely on themselves and work with detainees who challenge their authority (Nario-Lopez, 2017, 2021). Because it is not only the lives of the detainees and their families that is at stake but also the delivery of justice, sulking is not an option ("*Bawal dito magdrama, hindi kami nag eemote dito*") (Nario-Lopez, 2017). They need to make do with what they have.

More than mere guardians of the gate: Bringing justice from below

The country's penal system and core functions of the Bureau would have been long at stake if it were not for the officers' persistence and ingenuity. More than being mere guardians of the gate, officers fulfill tasks beyond their duties. Officers go from simply transporting detainees to their hearing, to following-up on the PDLs' cases and requirements, shelling out their own money, and even taking-in some PDLs in their own homes after detainment. Moreover, the millennial jail officers independently try to source further counseling training so they can appropriately respond to PDLs psychosocial concerns. As observed by a senior officer, this group of officers (more than those from older generations) see to it that they build trustworthy relationships with the PDL. Even though attending to these kinds of requests and niceties are not part of their job, the millennial officers know that no one can fill this role other than themselves.

In order to successfully rehabilitate the person in conflict with the law, officers know that PDLs must be evaluated using an evidence-based classification system where criminogenic risks[16] shall be assessed (also discussed in Nario-Lopez, in press). Acquiring the most suited programs is vital for a person's full rehabilitation because this follows a needs-based programming for value reorientation and livelihood skills development. Unfortunately, due to the daily influx of *komit*

(newly admitted PDLs) to the already overcrowded jail facility, the officers are forced to pack the PDLs in every crevice. Instead of formally assigning housing units where PDLs can functionally reinstate their habits, skills, outlooks, and aspirations in life, they are accommodated according to gang affiliation. It is important to note, however, that settling for gang affiliation in place of a PDL classification system does not denote neglect among officers. As discussed by Gutierrez (2012, 2020), *pangkat* (gang) affiliation serves as the PDLs network of social ties, source of emotional support, a reliable supply of basic material necessities such as food and medication, and a form of shared governance. Distributing responsibilities to maintain jail order is vital in an understaffed facility. The officer calls this state "equilibrium" and this is the best-managed expectation they can attain in the most deprived of conditions (Nario-Lopez, 2017).

With much spirit and optimism, the millennial officers untiringly lead various jail intervention programs, which were conceptualized and are assiduously implemented to simulate to the closest they can any Risk-Need-Responsivity-Programs available. These programs include Alternative Learning System, recreation activities, Therapeutic Community Modality Program, and *Katatagan Kontra Droga sa Komunindad*. They transformed the whole vicinity drug-free through randomized inspections, namely Operation Greyhound and *Oplan Linis-Piitan.* As of 2019, BJMP is already considered 80% drug-free and continues to strengthen ties with the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency and the Philippine National Police.

These tasks carried out by millennial jail officers go beyond the typical role of an officer. Thus, jail officers do not only deliver the justice that PDLs so deserve, but they do so while navigating through the hurdles brought about by the negligence of the national government. To the interlocutors, being a jail officer in an institution that "...upholds dignity and

respect for all human lives" (Nario-Lopez, 2017, p. 179) is an honor. They wear their uniform with pride as it symbolizes not only dignity in their being agents of the bureau (Nario-Lopez, 2017), but also as vanguards of justice. As bearers of fairness and keepers of democracy, the officers hope that the public appreciates their sacrifices. "I think the biggest barrier for me in my service is the lowly appraisal of others for the job that we do," said an officer, a sentiment that is shared by others. This is consistent with the findings of Nario-Lopez (2017) which reveal officer anxiety over "lack recognition, even devaluation, of the work they do'' (p. 244). The officers' awareness of the public perception that they are simply guardians (*taga-bantay*) of the gate detriments their morale and esteem, especially needed in arduous working conditions (Nario-Lopez 2017). "We are more than gatekeepers" ("*higit pa kami sa taga-bantay ng gate*"), affirmed another officer. But despite all odds, the officers continue to fill in the gaps from below.

What are we building with these promises?: Public service as civic engagement

It is hard to build a tower with only pieces of stray wood ("*Ang hirap magtayo ng building kung retasong kahoy lang ang meron ka*.")—this is how our millennial officers depicted their work. For millenial officers, PPR, the symbol of the nation's unity and of democracy, has failed to revolutionize a truly just society (Guillermo, 2016). The dire conditions in jail work remind them every day of how social injustice and poverty remain rampant in society. Yet, officers learned to navigate through their situations to keep their mandate and ensure PDL human development (Nario-Lopez, 2017, 2021, in press).

In contrast to how other studies problematize millennials' declining political and civic engagement as a cause of democratic fissures for societies, this study builds on

Cornelio's (2016, 2020) argument that millennials are neither apathetic nor politically disinterested but prefer other "personalized" forms of civic engagement. This paper also extends Arguelles (2020) arguments that millennials engage politically in causes to which they think they can significantly contribute. In elaborating both Cornelio's and Arguelles' ideas, this research provides empirical evidence on how millennials, specifically jail officers, commit to an alternative form of civic engagement—public service— "to improve conditions for others or to help shape the community's future" (Adler & Goggin, 2005, p. 241). This research puts at the forefront jail officers' value for the public service they provide as their own chosen embodiment of the lessons and promises of PPR. Public service, often associated with government work, is more than an employment category. "Public service is... an attitude, a sense of duty,... a sense of public morality" (Saats, 1988, as cited in Perry & Wise, 1990, p. 368), wherein the private and personal interests are utilized for the public interests (Bailey, 1964, p. 237). Both public service and civic engagement are essential for democracy and social justice-building.

Robert and Janet Denhardt's (2000) "new public service" illuminates millennial jail officers' value for their work. Denhardt and Denhardt (2000) explained that contemporary public service is founded on delivering norms of justice and fairness while serving the public interest by thinking and acting democratically. It is anchored on the notion that nation-building is not only the responsibility of elected officials, but also on successful public deliberation. All of which present in the valuation, vision, daily delivery of duties, and the ways by which jail officers share and deliberate on accountabilities with PDLs.

Mosher (1982) expounded theories on public service by acknowledging the pivotal role of professions in instilling justice and fairness. For jail officers, their work does not only serve as a

source of income, but as pivotal to PDLs' and their families' and communities' life. Being a member of the BJMP means securing the justice rehabilitation pillar by implementing appropriate programs, opportunities for education and recreation, and sometimes even informal counselling to help them successfully reintegrate to society.

While the jail officers may be performing a public-centered service, the institutional and structural aspects further marginalize the public interest, rather than reflect them. As echoed by the officers in various studies (Gutierrez, 2012, 2020; Narag, 2005; Nario-Lopez, 2017, 2021, in press), these gaps make it harder for officers to deliver high quality public service despite their attempts and aspirations. The implementation and innovation of new jail programs is like a thread to the needle for a couple of reasons. First, the rigid and hierarchical nature of the BJMP, as well as the constant rotation among jail officers and changes in leadership, create disconnect and confusion in jails. Not all wardens in position have the mindset or set of philosophies toward PDL rehabilitation. The officers expressed how they have been under warden administrations that do not comply with rehabilitative policies even if they were previously institutionalized as a nationwide policy within the BJMP. Being a first-hand witness to the grim conditions inside the jails, officers have been constantly innovating to make things better from within as a fulfillment of their duties as bearers of justice (Nario-Lopez, 2021). But as discussed in Nario-Lopez (2017), certain practices, such as the reshuffling of assignments every 2-3 years for security purposes, cause discontinuity of efforts on projects initiated by jail officers.

Second, is that there is a lack of cooperation among other governmental organizations. Democracy and justice are not achievable without the support and strategic coordination among institutions. Consistent with Denhardt and Denhardt's (2000) principles of public service, officers recognize that every

government agency— "[the] whole of government," as officer Jay referred to—should be involved in "fixing" the justice system by coordinating among and unifying themselves. The lack of efficiency in the flow between agencies of the criminal justice system affects the quality of how they deliver their job and justice.

As millennial jail officers continuously strive to rebuild the promises of a democratic and just society, supporting foundations should follow. Millennial jail officers aspire for the public to have a better understanding and a positive perception of Philippine jails; wish that the public rethinks PDL stigmatization; and recognize how they strive to provide better rehabilitation for the PDLs amid budget limitations. Until such time that these changes are made, millennial jail officers are at the center of it all—patching up the holes of PPR's promises through ingenuity in tireless public service.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Taking off from the promises of PPR and the conditions that led to their failure, this study explored how justice and democracy are embodied by millennial jail officers in their everyday practice of public service as their chosen form of civic engagement. This paper, thus, provided an enrichment of existing literature and provided bases to debunk millennial stereotypes. In doing so, this research provided strong empirical proof that millennials can traverse systemic challenges and actively contribute to nation-building. The narratives of millennial jail officers illustrated how their concept-making of PPR's failures and promises translate to their public service duties.

This study found that concepts of democracy and justice are cherished by millennial jail officers as part of the PPR's

heritage. To them, PPR was an epitome of Filipinos' unity to overthrow a dictator, reclaim rights and freedoms, and buttress democracy. In the officers' view, democracy, justice, and freedom are interdependent concepts. When there's democracy, there should be freedom and justice. Justice is a value that people owe to one another; similarly, fairness means giving what is due to all people one interacts with. Although the officers recognize the importance of PPR in strengthening the pillars of justice and restoring democracy, they too emphasized the challenges they faced on the ground as a consequence of the gap between the promises of PPR and how they are delivered in Philippine society, the criminal justice system, and specifically BJMP. Millennial jail officers highlighted poverty and unequal access to opportunities—aspects PPR vowed to address—as the root for most offenses. These are forms of legal and social injustices, which are further exacerbated by the public and government's failure to recognize such causes. Together, these translate to overpopulated jails, the transformation of light felony offenders to hardened criminals, and strain in implementing rehabilitation programs.

With the existence of these hurdles, this paper found that millennial jail officers are compelled to come up with short-term solutions carried in protracted periods in their hope to deliver justice to the PDLs. That millennial jail officers go beyond their duties to serve PDLs shows that civic engagement goes beyond electoral rights, activism, membership in organizations, and "conscious-consumerism." Public service in this study was found to be a form of service that caters to the public interest and is rooted in delivering justice and fairness, ultimately contributing to democracy.

Moreover, this research also showed that the kind of public service the jail officers perform is an embodiment of the lost promises of PPR; it is the millennial officers' choice of profession to serve the country that becomes their everyday

practice of civic engagement. Through their work, jail officers are fulfilling PPR's goal of "rebuilding the nation" by upholding and protecting their duties to justice. As millennial jail officers carry the promises of the once-globally-celebrated People Power Revolution and navigate through its failures, their biggest villain is the lack of hope. Until all other foundations come into place, they would continue to hold up the promises of fairness and justice the steadiest they can. This is a cry for help, the officers said.

This study recommends three research trajectories for future studies. First, future studies are encouraged to explore other contemporary means of millennial civic engagement, professions, and public servicing. More specifically, the scope of millennial public service should be broadened to include those working in private and non-profit sectors. Second, extraordinary times such as the COVID-19 pandemic are also giving rise to new forms of millennial political and civic engagement— it might be fruitful to focus on youth from various sectors who are thriving to pioneer new forms of collective movements and good governance, such as the emergence of millennial leaders in pandemic response and the boom of community pantries. Third, future studies could delve deeper into the sense-making of millennials' discontents toward traditional Philippine politics and incompetence of leaders, especially in relation to nation-rebuilding and reinforcement of democracy and justice. Fourth, this research begs to revisit and evaluate existing political structures in place that are supposed to serve as avenues for youth political engagement (e.g., National Youth Commission and Sangguniang Kabataan). This research dares to ask if alternative systems to rigid bureaucracies are more effective in inciting youth participation, e.g., horizontal governance and deliberative democracy (Curato, 2013; Ferguson, 2009). Lastly, this study advocates for the improvement of social esteem toward the youth. Instead of disregarding their opinions, societies and its institutions could

instead create, harness, and facilitate avenues by which young people can collaborate and contribute to nation-building.

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End Notes

[1] A four-day revolution of millions of Filipinos along Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (EDSA), which started as a *coup d'etat*, to overthrow the regime of President Ferdinand Marcos. After days of military pressure from then Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile's camp, political pressure from the United States, and pressure from Filipinos on the streets, Marcos was forced out of the country on February 25, 1986 (Katsiaficas, 2013).

[2] The Libingan ng mga Bayani (LNMB) was created to honor the legacy of those who fought for the country and greatly contributed to Philippine society. The burial of Marcos in the LNMB meant much more than burying a former president and dictator; his burial symbolized the delegitimization of the PPR, the restoration of "authoritarian fantasies," and the attempt to change the narratives of ML (Arguelles, 2017).

[3] According to jail officers, sustained and intense emotional labor, though draining, enables them to parry through the many challenges they have at work especially in the context of material deprivation, understaffing, and extralegal governance omnipresent among the detainee population (Nario-Lopez, 2017).

[4] Contrary to its original meaning of 'rescued', 'salvaged' was used in Marcos administration to depict the extrajudicial killings (Geronimo, 2016) of enemies of the state.

[5] Both Bongbong and Imee Marcos, children of the late dictator, urged the public to "move on" from the terrors of Martial Law (Macaraig, 2015) and the Aquino-Marcos feud. Imee further stated that "the millennials have moved on… [so] people at [her] age should... move on as well" (Cepeda, 2018).

[6] The 1987 constitution emphasizes the promotion of distributive justice by recognizing that property should be used to promote the common good. The State should "regulate the acquisition, ownership, and disposition of property" (Article XIII, Section 1) and that the State may intervene with private corporations' economic ventures when necessary.

[7] Among those who hoped for a better society were the “Martial Law Babies,” born 1960-1970s and grew up only knowing Marcos as president (Ocampo, 2020). In their youth, they witnessed the assination of Ninoy Aquino, protected the 1986 election ballots, and took their disdain to the streets during the PPR (Arguelles, 2020).

[8] Birth year ranges that differentiate one generation from another vary across literature. Some studies, such as the one by The Pew Research Center (see Dimock, 2019), consider only individuals born in 1981 to 1996 as millennials. For a more inclusive range, this study will adapt Cornelio’s (2020) denotation of millennials being born in the 1980s and 1990s.

[9] It must be noted that although other studies define civic engagement differently (Adler & Goggin, 2005, p. 241), the definition used in this research suffices in that it captures the other-orientedness of civic engagement.

[10] The importance of civic engagement for young citizens needs emphasis as formal practices of citizenship (e.g. voting) are not yet available to some young people (see Roholt et al., 2008).

[11] It is important to note that when this paper was conceptualized, written, and the data was gathered, the COVID-19 pandemic is yet to emerge as a global health catastrophe which completely changed the landscape of our daily lives.

[12] The Philippine criminal justice system is composed of 5 pillars: the law enforcement agency (Philippine National Police and National Bureau of Investigation), the prosecution (National Prosecution Service under the Department of Justice), the judiciary (all levels of courts), the penal or correctional institutions (BJMP, BuCor, and Department of Social Welfare and Development), and the community (Nario-Lopez, 2017; Valle-Corpuz, 1999)

[13] The judiciary, for example, was given fiscal autonomy (Valle-Corpuz, 1999). The Philippine National Police (PNP), which was created out of the Philippine Constabulary, became an agency that is “national in scope and civilian in character”

(Department of the Interior and Local Government Act of 1990).

[14] The Jail Management and Penology Service was part of the Philippine Constabulary-Integrated National Police prior to the creation of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) (BJMP, 2015; Department of the Interior and Local Government Act of 1990).

[15] Based on classified jail records

[16] Criminogenic chances are a composite of characteristics, learned behavior, socio-cultural contexts, and problems that correspond to a person's likelihood to commit or continually commit crimes.