

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to introduce the highlight of the thesis. First, it will discuss the background of the topic and why the case is chosen. Afterwards, the research questions will be formulated and then followed by the objectives of the research. Furthermore, a theoretical framework covering theories and concepts used in this research will be introduced to build an outline for the hypothesis. Finally, a systematical writing of the thesis will be composed.

### **A. Background**

Located in South East Asia, on the eastern shore of the Asian Mediterranean Sea, the Philippines is an archipelago of over 7,000 islands with a total land area of about 300,000 square kilometers. It has three major groups of islands: Luzon in the north, Visayas in the middle, and Mindanao in the south, with about 101 million in 2016 (World Population Review, 2018). The national language is Filipino, which is rooted in the Tagalog language, but English is also considered an official language. With regard to religion, 80 per cent of the Filipinos are Roman Catholics, while the other major religions include Islam and Protestantism.

In the last 50 years, major political turning points in the Philippines have demonstrated the transition from authoritarianism to an ostensible phase of democratization. The country was under the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos between 1972 and 1986. The era of authoritarianism was prolonged by martial law and brought about a consolidation of state power within the hands of the powerful themselves and the plundering of national wealth by the Marcos family and its business allies. The weak economy of the country and the assassination of Benigno Aquino further heightened Filipino anger. On February 7, 1986, Marcos held an early presidential election, met by a strong and powerful opposition, Corazon Aquino. February 25, 1986 represented an important national activity in the hearts and minds of the Filipinos. This aspect of Philippine history gives a

strong sense of pride, particularly in the fact that other nations have tried to mimic what the Filipinos have shown to the world the true power of democracy.

Duterte was born and raised in the southern provinces of the Philippines (Inquirer, n.d.). He was born in Maasin, Southern Leyte, on March 28, 1945. His uncle, Vincente G. Duterte, was a lawyer from Cebuano who became the acting mayor of Davao and later the provincial governor of the then undivided province of Davao. Duterte was elected mayor for the first time in 1988. He was elected twice as mayor and president over the next decade. He did not run for mayor in 1998 because of the time limit, but he managed to win a seat in the House of Representatives of the Philippines representing Davao. He returned to Davao City after his term ended in 2001 and was again elected mayor. The above limits were again implemented in 2010, when he was Deputy Mayor, and his daughter Sara served as Mayor. In 2013, Duterte returned to the mayor's office, this time alongside his son Paolo (Panarina, 2017).

In 2016, five candidates advanced for the presidential election. They were Jejomar Binay, Miriam Defensor Santiago, Rodrigo Duterte, Grace Poe and Manual Roxas II. The winner would replace Benigno Aquino III and sit in the presidency for six years. Based on a survey conducted by the Standard Poll, Duterte occupied the first position that is favored by the public who will come out as a winner. Approximately 32.4 percent of residents claimed to choose the Davao Mayor to become the next Philippine leader. After becoming president, Duterte prepared a 'watch list'. He obtained names from local police victims of drugs and elected officials. There are from 600,000 to 1 million names on it (in the various accounts of Duterte), including at least 6,000 police officers, 5,000 local villagers, and 23 mayors (New York Times, 2017). Most of the people on the list were targeted by Operation Knock & Plead (Oplan Tokhang), which resulted in 687,000 people being handed over to police across the country, further burdening the already overburdened criminal justice system. Those who do not give up are more likely to be targeted for extrajudicial execution. Many of the people who surrender were made to sign a promise to stay away from drugs.

CNN reported (as quoted in Virgin News, 2016) that two months after Duterte took office as president, more than 450 people were killed in this drug war campaign. Approximately 5,000 suspected drug dealers and drug addicts have been killed since President Rodrigo Duterte started his anti-drug war two years ago, according to the government's spokesman for the Drug Enforcement Agency, the initiative has shown no signs of slowing down amid persistent international criticism. Meanwhile, support for Duterte's policies remained strong across the country, with 88% of Filipinos expressing support for the ongoing drug war. Ironically, 73% of those questioned in the same poll agree that extrajudicial killings are taking place, suggesting that many endorse Duterte's attempts to crack down on drugs, even if it means going beyond the limits of the law. Duterte dismissed foreign calls to stop killings and rejected criticism of his approach as "weak" to crime and ignorant of the situation. Human rights activists who went to communities to collect victim data have repeatedly been threatened by the murder of Duterte on national television.

The Duterte administration's intensified war on drugs has drawn critics, not only from domestic institution, but also international organizations including the UN. While human rights organizations and political leaders protested the crackdown, Duterte was relatively successful in not getting the legislature seriously monitoring or investigating this war. In the meantime, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has expressed concern about the surge in killings of suspected drug personalities, noting that it is "not in line with the current provisions of international drug treaties" (Rappler, 2016). Since the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos in the 1970s and 1980s, President Duterte has plunged the Philippines into its greatest human rights crisis. His drug war, which started after taking office in June 2016, took an estimated 12,000 lives, including children, of mostly poor urban dwellers.

On February 2018, the International Criminal Court (ICC) opened a preliminary investigation into the controversial crackdown on drugs trafficking, which, according to the police, left almost 5,000 suspects dead in shootings during drug raids

after Mr. Duterte took office in mid-June 2016. ICC's investigation resulted in Philippines' withdrawal from International rights treaty (The Strait Times, 2018). The Duterte has criticized the West since the beginning of his presidency for his condemnation of his "war on drugs," reportedly involving extra-judicial killings. "He called for full respect for the sovereignty and right of the country to determine the best approach to drug elimination. Such allegations led to Duterte's verbal retribution against the US, the European Union, and the United Nations, which he regarded primarily as imperialist bullies imposing their norms and values on a sovereign nation. His contempt for such "foreign interference" contributed to his decision last March to withdraw from the International Criminal Court (ICC) membership of the Philippines. The pull-out was triggered by news of a preliminary review of allegations of crimes against humanity committed by the president and his officials during the drug war in the country (Taiwan News, 2018).

Duterte's government has broadened its "war on drugs" to include opponents and political enemies. Since February 2017, Senator Leila de Lima has been behind bars on politically motivated drug charges brought against her in apparent retaliation for leading a Senate investigation into drug war killings. Duterte has publicly condemned and threatened to dismantle the Human Rights Commission. He also repeatedly mocked the UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial Killings, Agnes Callamard, for her failure to make an official visit to the Philippines (Human Rights Watch, 2018).

Amid the attacks, Duterte appeared invincible. In the new Social Weather Station poll, respondents gave the government an 'excellent' score for its drug policy, with 74% of respondents saying they were satisfied with their efforts to protect human rights. Whether or not Duterte's war on drugs condones state-sponsored killings are questionable, ongoing inquiries and public discourse have led people to scrutinize the extra-judicial killing records of previous presidencies. The degree to which these debates will encourage or discourage the killing spree is still at stake, but they have definitely made the world feel the once

ignored presence of those who advocate violence as a means of restoring order in a democracy (Untalan, 2016).

## **B. Research Question**

Based on the data described in the background, the following research question was drawn:

*Why does Duterte still defend his war against drugs policy despite the domestic and international criticism?*

## **C. Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework used in this thesis was populism and legitimacy of power. The concept of populism has been defined differently by many scholars. The challenge of defining populism is partly due to the fact that the term has been used to describe political movements, ideologies, parties and leaders across geographical, historical and ideological contexts (Gidron&Bonikowski, 2013). Populism, in its various forms, is not only widespread across countries and regions, but has also appeared in different historical times. Across Latin America, populism, on the other hand, has mostly been related to an egalitarian vision of society, putting diverse ethnic groups together in common policy structures (Madrid, 2008 in Gidron&Bonikowski, 2013). Considering the diverse interpretation of the concept of populism, the writer will pick one from CasMudde who proposes A minimal theory of populism that can be used to examine political movements through time and space. Mudde described populism as a' thin-centered ideology that considers that society is essentially divided into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups; pure people versus corrupt elites, and which argues that politics should be an expression of the people's general will (Mudde, 2004, p. 543). Thus, populism is, first and foremost, a set of ideas characterized by an antagonism between the people and the elite. It also applies to the primacy of popular sovereignty, by which the good general will is opposed to the moral corruption of elite actors. (Gidron and Bonikowski, 2013).

Next is the legitimacy of power, David Easton Explains the Legitimacy of Power is a belief in every member in the

people who obeys and accepts various policies that were previously made by the authorities and has fulfilled various demands that exist in the ruling Regime. So that legitimacy has the understanding of a concept that can give birth to an attachment between the leader and the community. In a state government, legitimacy can be said its existence is very important especially for government leaders, because these leaders will always work hard in order to get or maintain from the legitimacy (JSTOR, 2019).

#### **D. Hypothesis**

Duterte still defends his war against drugs policy because of his populist policy. Through the description of the basic framework of the theory, it could be hypothesized that the factors that encouraged Duterte to keep defending his controversial policy despite getting much criticism was because it has been supported by his populist policies that increased the quality of life of the people, such as economics, social system, public servicing, the fight against corruption, and public safety. And so that legitimacy has the understanding of a concept that can give birth to an attachment between the leader and the community. In a state government, legitimacy can be said its existence is very important especially for government leaders, because these leaders will always work hard in order to get or maintain from the legitimacy

#### **E. Scope of Research**

The scope of the research of Duterte's policy on war of drugs was limited to the period of 1988-2018. The starting year is 1988, because it was when Duterte was first elected as a Mayor of Davao and initiating war on drugs policy. 2018 was chosen as the end of the scope of the research because it is two years after Duterte was elected as the President of Philippines where the result of Duterte's anti-mainstream policy has already been seen.

## **F. Research Objective**

This research goal was to analyze the impact of the political decision making on populist policies towards Duterte's popularity in his country and Duterte's image in international community. This research also aimed to enrich the studies of politics in the Philippine, particularly the strategy of war against drug.

## **G. Research Methodology**

This research used qualitative approach from secondary resources by collecting credible data from journals, news, books, websites, or any other things which supported this research through secondary data. Qualitative approach is a general way of thinking about conducting qualitative research. It describes, either explicitly or implicitly, the purpose of the qualitative research, the role of the researcher(s), the stages of research, and the method of data analysis. Meanwhile secondary data is research data that has previously been gathered and can be accessed by researchers. Qualitative approach is a general way of thinking about qualitative research. This defines, whether explicitly or implicitly, the objective of qualitative research, the position of the researcher(s), the stage(s) of research and the process of data analysis. Meanwhile, secondary data is research data that has already been collected and can be accessed by researchers.

## **H. Outline**

Chapter I This chapter aims to introduce the highlight of the thesis. First, it will discuss the background of the topic and why the case was chosen. Afterwards, the research questions would be formulated as well as the objectives of the research. Furthermore, a theoretical framework covering theories and concepts used in this research would be introduced to build an outline for hypothesis. Finally, the systematical writing of the thesis would be composed.

Chapter II This chapter discusses general condition and political situation of the Philippines before Duterte's administration regarding some general information about the

Philippines in a glance: its demographic, natural resources, social and economic condition. It also explores the Philippines history since ancient times, its establishment to its condition under colonialism. It is followed by more detailed information related to political situation from the past to modern political history, especially from the past 50 years. The chapter also discussed the Philippines under a long-term ESDA administration as well as the election of 2016 that put ESDA to an end, A Brief profile of Rodrigo Duterte, and how Duterte won the election in 2016.

Chapter III This chapter talks about Duterte's controversial policy of war against Drugs. Like the previous chapter, this chapter is also divided into sub chapters. It begins with Drugs statistics in Philippines. How drugs are widely used in the country, which was notorious as a heaven for drug dealers and drug users. On the last part of the chapter, it discusses domestic and international critics against Duterte's policy of war on drug and 'extra-judicial killing' that is considered as an action against human rights.

Chapter IV This chapter talks about the Philippines under Duterte's administration. Like the previous chapter, this chapter is also divided into sub chapters. It begins with the brief profile of Duterte, from his childhood, his education history, his debut in politics to his achievement during his role as mayor of Davao when he successfully transformed Davao from a slum city to peaceful city within one decade. The chapter also writes about Duterte's controversial policy of war on drug, the same policy he applied in managing Davao, which was notorious as a heaven for drug dealers and drug users. On the last part of the chapter, it discusses domestic and international critics against Duterte's policy of war on drug and 'extra-judicial killing' that is considered as an action against human rights.

Chapter V This chapter will draw conclusion of the thesis and answer the research question. Why does Duterte still defend his controversial policy although it was criticized by Domestic and International side.