

CHAPTER V CONCLUSION

Because of his populist policy, Duterte still defends his war against drugs policy, even though the policy is controversial and full of critics. Wissenschaftliche research also suggests that, as long as it provides basic public services and maintains law and order, the majority of Filipinos support a strong leadership that is not concerned with elections. This partially explains why Duterte has failed to call for strong public reaction in repeated threats to impose national martial law, create or abolish the legislature. Duterte has a powerful and lasting popularity to challenge the nation's traditional pillars of influence. In his 2017 survey, Pulse Asia, a local pollster, showed that up to 80% of Filipinos are in favor. It also appears that the Filipino public warms up the idea of a one-man rule. According to Pew Survey, half of the Filipinos favor a leader who is authoritarian and has minimal responsibility to other branches of government.

Populists cannot just continue condemning enemies unless they produce genuinely positive results for the people, according to Arugay&Magcamit (2017). Foreign policy should not, in this sense, be simply a tirade bag, but a way of achieving the national interest described as promoting and safeguarding people's well-being by the Duterte administration. Thus, the President of the fire brand can cease to be a mere populist and become the man who improves the living conditions of the ordinary Filipinos substantially. An economic interest-oriented foreign policy could help Duterte strengthen his country's leadership.

Despite gaining popularity nationally, Duterte has been facing serious criticism both nationally and internationally on his policy on drug war causing thousands of people dead on extrajudicial killings. It can be said that the Duterte's politics on drug war is locally popular, yet, globally controversial. However, Duterte has to be careful with the more and more critics from international human rights organizations that might put his presidential perpetuity into jeopardy. There's no doubt about the future, and Duterte cannot sustain his courageous and acerbic foreign-policy approach. In the

beginning, the tactic was working well for awe and surprise, but sooner rather than later this rhetoric would lose its voice. His domestic public could become tired, particularly if policies do not make a significant contribution to changing Filipinos' daily life. The task for populists like Duterte is to balance success with substance. As stated by Mudde (2004), politics should be an expression of the general will of the people. Duterte ensures his policy reflects the general will of Filipinos. Duterte's undemocratic politics gets popular legitimacy from the perceived majority of the population. In this case, Duterte represents to be on the side of, what Mudde called as, 'pure people', not as the opposite 'corrupt elite'.

Despite international criticism on his drug war policy, Duterte has achieved some important accomplishments nationally. Many significant legislations or orders passed under his watch and strongly supported by the House of Congress. In fact, those new and amended legislations, such as Tertiary Education Act, National ID Law, Business Act, Security Social Coverage for overseas Filipino workers, were addressed to improve social welfare and national security. Finally, the conclusion of this thesis can be drawn and answer the research questions; Duterte still gains more popularity in the country because he can perform his populist policy as an expression of the will of most Filipinos. The pros and contrast of his politics will always exist. However, the positive impact of his accomplishments is greater than the negative impact of international critics on his politics. As emphasized by Untalan (2016),

The influence of Duterte is related to the brief yet significant experience of electing a president in the Philippines, despite the right to vote given to the Philippines by the United States. It shows the implications of the democratic politics EDSA process and, in general, the irony with which an authoritarian leader is chosen to reform a malignant democracy. In Philippine domestic and international politics Duterte has probably introduced unconventional actions. His awful victory over usual power players showed a society that wants change, not happy with the initial failure to deliver on oligarchic politics by the post-EDSA process. More significantly, it created a space that became sufficiently contentious to expose the willingness of a majority to experiment with a leader who offered a better situation in the country. In spite of his domestic

and international critiques and derision of his rough and impulsive nature, Duterte has attracted enough supporters to tolerate even brutal forms of discipline in this region. When democracy represents the will of the people, Duterte is a victim of democracy.