



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



Legal Research Functions of Paralegals in the Public and Private Sectors: Basis for Proposing a Professionalization Framework in the Philippines

Alyssa V. Santos *

Master in Public Administration, University of Perpetual Help, Manila, Philippines.

International Journal of Science and Research Archive, 2025, 16(03), 592–602

Publication history: Received on 01 August 2025; revised on 07 September 2025; accepted on 10 September 2025

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30574/ijrsra.2025.16.3.2552>

Abstract

This study examined the legal research functions of Paralegals in the Philippine public and private sectors as the basis for proposing a Professionalization Framework. Anchored in Wilensky's (2021) Professionalization Theory, and supported by Lau's (2024) Seven Core Paralegal Duties and Masiko's (2025) Paralegal Qualities Model, the research explored how performance, competence, and stakeholder perception align to support the Professionalization of Paralegals. A quantitative descriptive-correlational research design was employed using stratified purposive sampling. A total of 272 respondents participated in the study, including practicing lawyers, paralegal employees, clients, professors, law students, and law graduates.

The study assessed the observed performance of Paralegals in seven (7) core duties, such as legal research, document drafting, managing projects, dealing with clients, filing documents, attending court, and case management, and examined the contribution of four (4) essential qualities: attention to detail, organizational skills, research skills, and critical thinking. It also measured perceptions of the professionalization indicators, including the establishment of training institutions, occupational associations, legal recognition, and a code of ethics.

Findings revealed that while Paralegals contribute significantly to legal research and service delivery, their roles remain inconsistently defined and undervalued due to the lack of regulatory frameworks and formal recognition. A statistically significant correlation ($r = .673$, $p < .001$) was found between paralegal performance and the perceived need for Professionalization, indicating that as performance improves, so does the urgency for structural reforms.

Keywords: Paralegal; Legal Research; Professionalization Theory; Emergence of Occupation; Seven Core Duties of Paralegal; Qualities of Paralegal.

1. Introduction

Paralegals are the backbone of compliance, legal research, and legal-administrative processes. Although they work under the direction of a lawyer, Paralegals are indispensable legal support professionals who operate in both public and private institutions. With the growing complexity of legal requirements in the government, public procurement, labor, and corporate compliance, Paralegals significantly contribute to legal knowledge through their skills in legal research. Just as every government office or private corporation needs lawyers, Paralegals are relied upon to provide preliminary legal research and analysis.

Despite Paralegal's critical function, the profession remains informal and largely unregulated in the Philippines. Paralegals undergo certification and continuous legal education in the United States and Canada, which significantly contributes to legal efficiency and access to justice (American Bar Association, 2022; Canadian Association of Paralegals,

* Corresponding author: Alyssa Santos

2021). In contrast, Philippine Paralegals lack standardized training, credentials, and professional recognition. While the Philippine Constitution guarantees that “free access to the courts and quasi-judicial bodies and adequate legal assistance shall not be denied to any person by reason of poverty” (Art. III, Sec. 11, 1987 Constitution), and while Republic Act No. 9999 or the Free Legal Assistance Act of 2010 and Republic Act No. 9406 strengthening the Public Attorney’s Office recognize the necessity of broadening legal services to the public, there remains no statutory framework defining or accrediting Paralegal practice.

Undeniably, the Philippines continues to face challenges in achieving good governance and efficient service delivery at the national level. According to the Civil Service Commission, in 2023, approximately 33% of administrative sanctions issued in 2022 were due to procedural and compliance lapses that could have been prevented by competent legal review. At the local level, government units frequently encounter backlogs in procurement processes, contract review, and regulatory interpretation. These are areas where trained Paralegals can make meaningful contributions through legal research and administrative support. Furthermore, the Civil Service Commission posts government jobs on its website but only a limited number of government positions offer *plantilla* items for Paralegals. While Paralegals provide significant support in legal research within the government, the absence of a regulatory framework has led to inconsistencies in how agencies define, recruit, and utilize Paralegal staff. This results in overlapping scopes of work and a lack of emphasis on the vital contribution of legal research. In the private sector, Paralegals are also widely employed across industries. They perform legal research functions that support corporate compliance, contract review, and internal policy development. The variation in how Paralegals are utilized in both sectors highlights the absence of a structure to support their legal research functions and professional development.

Multiple studies have recognized the contributions of Paralegals in several legal contexts. For instance, Santos (2023) highlighted the role of Paralegals in community-based legal aid and alternative dispute resolution, particularly in remote areas with limited lawyer presence. Mendoza (2023) emphasized the function of corporate Paralegals in maintaining legal compliance and risk management in multinational companies. In the global context, Maru and Gauri (2020) discussed the role of Paralegals in bridging the access to justice gap in developing countries. However, few studies focus specifically on the paralegal’s function in legal research, and even fewer address how these contributions affect the machinery of public administration. Despite their growing responsibilities, Paralegals in the Philippines operate in a fragmented and inconsistent professional environment. The gap lies in the lack of empirical data assessing the legal research contributions of Paralegals and how these justify the need for Professionalization. The educational attainment of Paralegals, coupled with the training and experience they amass, is imperative to the legal profession, allowing them to perform substantive legal work that requires the recognition, evaluation, organization, analysis, and communication of relevant facts and legal concepts (Zubiri, 2023). The absence of formal recognition, standardized training, and oversight mechanisms limits their effectiveness and integration into governance structures. This lack of systematization represents a missed opportunity to strengthen the public and private sectors’ capacity for legal compliance and effectiveness.

This study seeks to address this gap by assessing the legal research functions of Paralegals working in both public and private sectors in the Philippines. By analyzing their roles, scope of work, and perceived impact on compliance and administrative efficiency, the study aims to provide evidence-based support for the creation of a Paralegal Professionalization Model. Such a model would help standardize qualifications, improve service delivery, and promote accountability in legal processes.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Theoretical Framework

The present study is anchored in the 7 Core Paralegal Duties, which were published by Matthew Lau last February 12, 2024. He explains that Research, legal document drafting, client interviews, communication with opposing counsel, and case theory development are all tasks performed by Paralegals. Instead of carrying out the crucial administrative tasks of a legal assistant, the paralegal collaborates directly with and represents a lawyer. The following core legal duties are described as:

- *Research Cases.* Important research can include fact-checking, getting formal statements and affidavits, interviewing, and developing case theories.
- *Draft Documents.* Paralegals can draft important documents for Lawyers, such as memorandums, briefs, legal arguments, and legal forms.

- *Organize Casework.* Under the supervision of a Lawyer, Paralegals can process and organize important case files, such as medical records or transcripts. Professionals use their advanced office software skills to store and retrieve important documents.
- *Upload and File Documents.* Paralegals can upload documents for official filing and stamping under the supervision of a Lawyer. This includes documents like affidavits, claims, briefs, statements, and so forth.
- *Interface with clients and opposing counsel.* This includes interviewing clients for the case. Paralegals can also communicate with the opposing counsel.
- *Manage Projects.* Paralegals can be trusted to delegate work, prepare for deadlines, and keep cases organized. Sometimes, the Paralegal may work with a Legal Assistant to achieve their goals.
- *Attend Court.* The Paralegal can join the Lawyer for important court dates, but they can't represent the client. They can help manage casework, retrieve documents, prepare files, and more.

With these 7 core paralegal duties, the researcher intends to assess the performance of the paralegal personnel of selected private and public companies in Metro Manila.

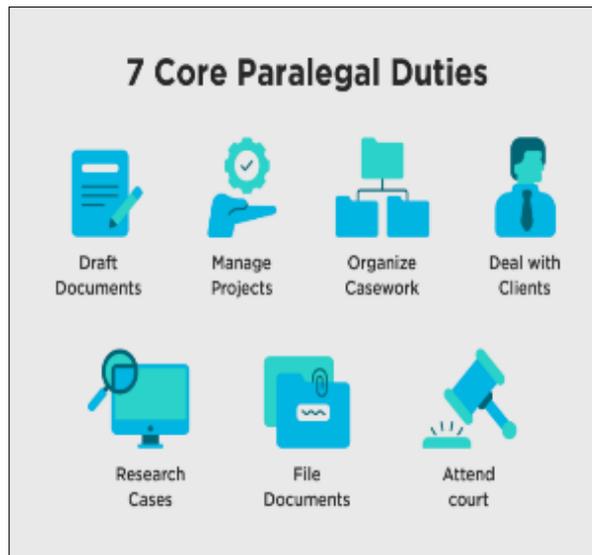


Figure 1 The 7 Core Paralegal Duties (Lau, 2024)

The research also investigates how a Paralegal's qualities, such as attention to detail, organizational skills, research skills, and critical thinking, contribute to the professionalization of their legal research functions, drawing on the concepts published by Ashleigh Masiko (2025). The Paralegal job description outlines the duties of a specialist who handles cases, conducts research, writes papers, communicates with clients, and performs other legal and administrative tasks to support attorneys. These professionals essentially assist lawyers in order to guarantee efficient case development. On the other hand, the following qualities are indeed important to ensure the efficiency of a Paralegal

- *Attention to Detail.* It is crucial to ensure accuracy in legal documents, contracts, and research.
- *Organizational Skills.* This means being able to stay organized, manage files, and prioritize tasks is essential for efficiency and effectiveness.
- *Research Skills.* Paralegals need excellent research abilities to find relevant laws, regulations, and legal precedents.
- *Critical Thinking.* This helps in understanding complex situations and finding appropriate solutions.

The researcher would like to determine how such qualities of a Paralegal contribute to professionalizing their legal research functions.



Figure 2 Qualities of a Paralegal (Masiko, 2025)

Finally, the study is theoretically anchored in Harold Wilensky's (2021) Professionalization Theory, which explains the evolution of occupations into formal professions through standardized qualifications, a code of ethics, and regulatory recognition. By applying this framework, the research aims to establish a strong, positive correlation between the demonstrated competence of Paralegals and the perceived need for their formal professionalization. The ultimate goal is to use these findings to design a structured framework that supports the growing roles and responsibilities of Paralegals within the Philippine justice system.



Figure 3 Professionalization Theory (Wilensky, 2021)

2.2. Sampling and Data Collection

The study used a stratified quota sampling strategy to include paralegals from both the public and private sectors. Since a national registry of paralegals doesn't exist, an a priori power analysis with G*Power 3.1.9.4 was conducted to determine a suitable sample size. The analysis aimed for a 95% power to detect a significant difference between the two sectors. The respondents of the survey included at least 50 individuals from each of the following groups: practicing lawyers, paralegals, clients, law professors, law students, and law graduates, totaling 272 participants.

2.3. Research Instruments and Analysis

The primary research instrument was a four-part survey questionnaire designed by the researcher. It covered respondent profiles, observation of legal research functions, assessment of qualities contributing to professionalization, and perceptions of the need for professionalization of Paralegals. The instrument's validity and reliability were ensured through expert recommendations and a pilot test with 30 Paralegals. The pilot test results were analyzed using Cronbach's alpha, with an acceptable value of 0.70 or higher. The data gathering procedure involved securing approval, distributing the survey via Google Forms, and a two-week administration period, followed by data cleaning and encoding. The statistical treatment included frequency and percentage to analyze demographic data, weighted mean and standard deviation to summarize responses, and a Likert scale to measure respondent assessments.

3. Results and discussion

This part presents, analyzes, and interprets the data collected throughout the research. Each table is labeled with an appropriate title, and significant data are identified and analyzed.

3.1. Profile of the Respondents

The study surveyed a diverse group of 272 individuals, with a majority being female (60.3%) and falling within the 26-35 age bracket (34.2%). This demographic profile suggests the sample is composed of relatively young to middle-aged legal professionals who are actively engaged in their careers. Furthermore, the respondents had a balanced mix of experience, with a slight majority having 1-3 years of service (34.6%). This mix of both new and veteran professionals provides a comprehensive perspective on the paralegal role.

The study included participants from both the public (55.1%) and private (44.9%) sectors and featured a well-distributed mix of positions, including practicing lawyers, clients, and law professors, in addition to Paralegals. This diverse representation of stakeholders is crucial, as it ensures the findings on Paralegal performance and the need for professionalization are well-rounded and not limited to the perspective of any single group.

Table 1 Profile of the Respondents as to Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
25 Years Old and Below	62	22.8
26-35 Years Old	93	34.2
36-45 Years Old	60	22.1
46-55 Years Old	48	17.6
56 Years Old and Above	9	3.3
Total	272	100.0

Table 2 Profile of the Respondents as to Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	108	39.7
Female	164	60.3
Total	272	100.0

Table 3 Profile of the Respondents as to Years in Service

Years in service	Frequency	Percentage
1-3 Years	94	34.6
4-7 Years	86	31.6
7 Years and Above	92	33.8
Total	272	100.0

Table 4 Profile of the Respondents as to Company Current Affiliation

Company Affiliation	Frequency	Percentage
Public	150	55.1
Private	122	44.9
Total	272	100.0

Table 5 Profile of the Respondents as to Position

Position	Frequency	Percentage
Practicing Lawyer	55	20.2
Paralegal	60	22.1
Client of Legal Services	52	19.1
Law Professor	51	18.8
Law Graduate/Law Student	54	19.9
Total	272	100.0

3.2. Assessment of the Respondents on the Performance of the Paralegal Personnel of Selected Private and Public Companies

The overall composite mean of 4.50 (SD = 0.76) indicates that Paralegals are generally perceived to perform their core duties effectively. This overall performance is a strong argument for the growing importance of Paralegals in legal environments. The consistency of high scores across duties reflects a mature skillset among paralegal professionals, supporting initiatives for their Professionalization, as argued by Wilensky's Professionalization Theory (2021).

Table 6 Summary of the Assessment of the Performance of the Paralegal Personnel of Selected Private and Public Companies

Indicators	Mean	Sd	Interpretation	Rank
1. Draft Documents	4.45	0.79	Agree / Effective Performance	7
2. Manage Projects	4.48	0.75	Agree / Effective Performance	5.5
3. Organize Case Works	4.50	0.77	Agree / Effective Performance	4
4. Deal with Clients	4.53	0.75	Strongly Agree / Highly Effective Performance	1.5
5. Research Cases	4.53	0.74	Strongly Agree / Highly Effective Performance	1.5
6. File Documents	4.52	0.75	Strongly Agree / Highly Effective Performance	3

7. Attend Court	4.48	0.79	Agree / Effective Performance	5.5
Overall Mean	4.50	0.76	Agree / Effective Performance	

3.3. Significant Difference in the Observation of the Respondents as to how Paralegal Personnel Perform the Core Paralegal Duties

Based on the study's findings, a Paralegal's performance is perceived differently depending on the respondent's age, organizational affiliation, and position, while their gender and years of service had no significant impact. The data shows that younger respondents (25 and below) consistently rated paralegals higher on key duties like drafting, project management, and client interaction compared to older age groups, particularly those over 56. This highlights how generational differences in workplace expectations and exposure to evolving practices can shape perceptions of competence.

The study also found that the respondent's professional context matters. Those in the public sector rated paralegals significantly higher in procedural tasks such as drafting, case organization, and court attendance. This suggests that the institutional focus and training within public offices may influence how these specific skills are valued. Finally, the most notable difference in perception came from the respondent's position: clients and students gave the highest ratings, while law professors gave the lowest. This indicates that professional benchmarks vary widely, with academic stakeholders likely using stricter criteria compared to those who primarily value practical, hands-on assistance.

3.4. Assessment of the Qualities of the Paralegals that Contribute to Professionalizing their Legal Research Function

Table 7 reveals that when the four assessed qualities are ranked collectively, research skills are considered the most vital in contributing to the Professionalization of Paralegals' legal research functions, with a mean of 4.59. Organization skills follow closely (mean = 4.56), then critical thinking (mean = 4.52), and finally attention to detail (mean = 4.51). Although all attributes are interpreted as "Highly Effective Performance," the slight variations in ranking suggest that stakeholders prioritize the paralegal's technical ability to conduct research and manage legal information above other traits. This composite overview emphasizes that while all four competencies are essential, targeted development in research and organization yields the most substantial impact on enhancing the quality and professionalism of legal research outputs.

Francisco (2022), analyzing Paralegal roles in urban legal aid clinics, found that proficiency in legal research and case file management significantly correlated with faster case resolution and client satisfaction. Similarly, Reyes (2023) demonstrated in a comparative study of public and private law offices that Paralegals with strong organizational and research competencies contributed more effectively to compliance monitoring and litigation preparation. These findings affirm the importance of investing in research and organizational training to professionalize paralegal services in the Philippines.

Table 7 Summary of the Assessment on the Qualities of the Paralegal Personnel Contribute to Professionalizing their Legal Research Functions

Indicators	Mean	Sd	Interpretation	Rank
1. Attention to Details	4.51	0.70	Strongly Agree / Highly Effective Performance	4
2. Organization Skills	4.56	0.72	Strongly Agree / Highly Effective Performance	2
3. Research Skills	4.59	0.66	Strongly Agree / Highly Effective Performance	1
4. Critical Thinking	4.52	0.69	Strongly Agree / Highly Effective Performance	3
Composite Mean	4.55	0.69	Strongly Agree / Highly Effective Performance	

3.5. Assessment on the Perception of the Respondents on the Need for Professionalizing Paralegal Personnel to Improve their Legal Research Functions Leading to Quality Service of the Public and Private Sectors

Table 8 shows that among the five thematic areas, the emergence of the occupation and the code of ethics governing conduct are tied as the highest-rated indicators, each with a mean of 4.69, followed by public recognition and legal support (4.68), formation of occupational associations (4.67), and lastly establishing training schools (4.63). The overall composite mean is 4.67, interpreted as Strongly Agree / Highly Effective Performances. This pattern suggests that while

education and training are vital, institutional legitimacy, ethical standards, and legal recognition are perceived as even more essential in the Professionalization of Paralegals, especially in the context of improving legal research functions and ensuring quality legal services in the Philippines. As Mendoza and Soriano (2022) and Santos (2023) both emphasize, the convergence of institutional recognition, ethical conduct, and public trust forms the core foundation for transforming paralegal work from a support occupation into a formalized profession.

Table 8 Summary of the Assessment on the Perception of the Respondents on the Need for Professionalizing Paralegal Personnel to Improve their Legal Research Functions Leading to Quality Services of the Public and Private Sectors

Indicators	Mean	Sd	Interpretation	Rank
1. Emergence of the Occupation	4.69	0.62	Strongly Agree / Highly Effective Performance	1.5
2. Establishing Training Schools	4.63	0.69	Strongly Agree / Highly Effective Performance	5
3. Formation of Occupational Association	4.67	0.62	Strongly Agree / Highly Effective Performance	4
4. Public Recognition and Legal Support	4.68	0.63	Strongly Agree / Highly Effective Performance	3
5. Code of Ethics Governing Conduct	4.69	0.62	Strongly Agree / Highly Effective Performance	1.5
Overall Mean	4.67	0.64	Strongly Agree / Highly Effective Performance	

3.6. Correlation between the Performance of the Paralegal and Professionalizing Them

Table 11 reveals a strong positive correlation between the performance of Paralegals and the perceived need to professionalize them, with a Pearson’s r-value of 0.673 and a significance value of 0.000. The result is statistically significant at the 0.05 level, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This implies that as Paralegals perform better in their core duties, such as legal research, drafting, and client interaction, the demand for their formal Professionalization also increases. The finding underscores the notion that effective performance calls for formal structures, such as training, ethical standards, and legal recognition, to sustain and institutionalize high-quality legal service delivery in both the public and private sectors.

This result is consistent with Wilensky’s (2021) Professionalization Theory, which asserts that as occupational roles demonstrate increasing competence and societal value, they begin to seek legitimacy through Professionalization mechanisms. More recent studies echo this relationship: Bouchoux (2024) highlighted that Paralegals in common-law jurisdictions who exhibit strong performance in research and case preparation often serve as catalysts for regulatory and certification initiatives. Similarly, Mendoza and Soriano (2022) found in the Philippine context that Paralegals demonstrated competence in legal research and case drafting drives the push for formal recognition and accreditation. Moreover, Santos (2023) emphasized that without institutionalized ethical standards and structured training, performance gains risk being unsustainable, thereby reinforcing the need for Professionalization frameworks.

Table 9 Correlation between the Performance of the Paralegal and Professionalizing Them

Variable Tested		R-Value	Degree of Correlation	Sig Value (2 tailed)	Decision on HO	Interpretation
Performance of the Paralegal	Professionalizing the Paralegal Personnel	.673	Strong Positive Correlation	.000	Reject/Ho not Supported	Significant

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concludes that Paralegals in the Philippines are perceived as highly effective, particularly in core duties like legal research, with their strong organizational and critical thinking skills contributing to this high performance. The research found a significant relationship between Paralegals’ performance and the perceived need for their professionalization, with key stakeholders strongly agreeing on the necessity of formal education, occupational associations, and a code of ethics to elevate the profession. These findings highlight that the strong performance of Paralegals and a comprehensive professionalization framework will not only enhance the quality of legal services but will also create a clear pathway for professional development that ensures improved public and private sector services for the Philippines.

Based on the data gathered and analyzed, the study arrived at the following conclusions

- The majority of respondents are young to mid-career professionals, predominantly aged 25–44, with most holding either a bachelor's degree or a law degree. Respondents came from both public and private sectors and represent diverse roles, including Paralegals, law students, lawyers, professors, and clients. This diversity affirms the relevance and need for a broad-based understanding of the paralegal role in various legal environments.
- Paralegals are perceived to perform highly effectively across all seven (7) core duties, particularly in legal research, client interaction, and drafting legal documents. While performance remains strong overall, direct participation in court hearings received slightly lower ratings possibly due to legal limitations on non-lawyer representation. Performance differences based on educational background and role suggest that expectations and perceptions vary across respondent types.
- Key Paralegal traits such as research skills, attention to detail, critical thinking, and organizational ability were all rated as highly important to their legal research functions. These qualities underpin the demand for more structured training, recognition, and regulation of Paralegal practice.
- There is a strong, consistent agreement among respondents on the necessity of professionalizing Paralegals to improve the quality and credibility of legal research outputs. The strongest support was seen for the establishment of ethical codes, formal training institutions, and occupational associations. The perception that Paralegals are an emerging professional class also strengthens the argument for regulatory reform.
- A strong, positive correlation was found between Paralegals' performance in core duties and the perceived need to professionalize them. This indicates that the better the Paralegals perform, the more stakeholders believe in the need for formal recognition and structured development of the profession.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

References

- [1] American Bar Association. (2020). Task Force on the Future Legal Education report. American Bar Association
- [2] Bishay, J. (2022). The evolving role of paralegals in modern legal practice. Legal Publishing House.
- [3] Bouchoux, D. E. (2024). Legal research and writing for paralegals (10th ed.). Aspen Publishing
- [4] Canadian Association of Paralegals. (2022). Professional standards and guidelines for paralegals. Canadian Association of Paralegals.
- [5] Cannon, L. (2021). Organizational skills for legal professionals. Law Practice Management Press.
- [6] Cass, R. (2021). Technology and the modern paralegal. Legal Tech Innovations.
- [7] Chau, S. (2021). Risk management in legal practice: The paralegal's role. Legal Practice Risk Solutions.
- [8] Cruz, J. P. (2022). State recognition and the professionalization of auxiliary legal occupations in the Philippines. *Philippine Journal of Legal Studies*, 18(2), 201–219.
- [9] Cruz, J. P. (2023). Strengthening legal support through paralegal education: A framework for training institutions in the Philippines. *Philippine Journal of Legal Education*, 5(1), 77–92.
- [10] Cruz, M. A. (2023). Sectoral variations in paralegal functions: Implications for training and professionalization in the Philippines. *Philippine Journal of Legal Management*, 15(1), 44–60.
- [11] Davidson, L., and Hunter, R. (2022). Stakeholder perceptions of paralegal competence: A comparative study of legal education, practice, and client expectations. *Journal of Legal Education and Practice*, 14(2), 101–118.
- [12] Davis, A., and Lee, B. (2022). Public interest law and the paralegal profession. Justice Publications.

- [13] Dela Cruz, R. M. (2023). Building trust through ethics: Standardizing professional conduct of paralegals in the Philippines. *Journal of Legal Ethics and Practice*, 12(1), 55–73.
- [14] Del Rosario, P. M., and Santos, K. L. (2021). Gender and performance perceptions in Philippine professional workplaces. *Philippine Journal of Human Resource Management*, 7(1), 55–68.
- [15] Dizon, R. M. (2022). Formalizing the role of paralegals in Philippine legal practice: Implications for access to justice. *Philippine Law Journal*, 96(2), 211–234.
- [16] Foster, E. (2021). Career progression in legal support roles: Challenges and opportunities. *Professional Development Journal*, 12(3), 77–95.
- [17] Forsyth, P. B., and Danisiewicz, T. J. (1985). Toward a theory of professionalization. *Work and Occupations*, 12(1), 59–76. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0730888485012001004>
- [18] Francisco, M. L. (2022). The impact of paralegal research and administrative competencies on client outcomes in urban legal aid clinics in Metro Manila (Unpublished master's thesis). University of the Philippines Diliman.
- [19] Freidson, E. (2001). *Professionalism: The third logic*. University of Chicago Press.
- [20] Global Paralegal Institute. (2023). *Paralegal education and workforce trends*. Global Paralegal Institute.
- [21] Goforth, J. (2020). Performance metrics in corporate legal departments. *Business Law Review*, 45(2), 55–67.
- [22] Goodman, G. R. (2020). Professionalism. In J. D. Bronzino (Ed.), *Clinical engineering handbook* (2nd ed., pp. 378–383). Academic Press.
- [23] Harris, P. (2022). Gender diversity in the legal support profession. *Journal of Legal Demographics*, 8(1), 23–41.
- [24] Institute of Paralegals. (2022). *Code of conduct and professional ethics for paralegals*. Institute of Paralegals.
- [25] Johnson, K., and Becker, L. (2021). The importance of formal paralegal education. *Journal of Legal Education Standards*, 9(2), 77–92.
- [26] Larson, A. (2021). The evolution of professions: A comparative study. *Professional Studies Quarterly*, 14(1), 33–50.
- [27] Lau, M. (2024, February). What does a paralegal do in Canada? [Duties + salary]. Robertson College.
- [28] Lawyers Mutual Insurance Company. (2024). Paralegal and legal support staff. Retrieved September 1, 2025, from <https://lawyersmutualinc.com/your-practice/paralegal-legal-support-staff/>
- [29] Martin, C. (2020). Legal recognition of paralegals: Global perspectives. *International Journal of Legal Practice*, 11(2), 66–84.
- [30] Maru, V., and Gauri, V. (Eds.). (2018). *Community paralegals and the pursuit of justice*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316671801>
- [31] Masiko, A. (2025). Qualities of a paralegal. Human Capital Hub. <https://humancapitalhub.com>
- [32] Mendoza, L. A. (2023). Paralegal recognition and professionalization: Enhancing accountability in legal support services. *Journal of Philippine Legal Studies*, 18(1), 45–63.
- [33] Mendoza, L. R., and Soriano, J. P. (2022). Generational perspectives on professionalization in the Philippine legal services sector. *Philippine Journal of Legal Studies*, 18(2), 45–63.
- [34] Mendoza, P. L., and Soriano, J. V. (2022). Toward professionalization: Institutionalizing paralegal practice in the Philippine justice system. *Philippine Journal of Public Administration*, 66(2), 145–168.
- [35] Mendoza, R. T., and Soriano, A. L. (2022). Professional associations and the regulation of legal support services in the Philippines. *Philippine Journal of Public Administration*, 66(2), 145–162.
- [36] Morgan, R. (2020). Professional recognition for legal support professionals. *Legal Career Development Review*, 8(1), 12–29.
- [37] National Federation of Paralegal Associations. (2021). *NFPA model code of ethics and professional responsibility*. National Federation of Paralegal Associations.
- [38] Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines. (2007). Republic Act No. 9406: An act reorganizing and strengthening the Public Attorney's Office (PAO). <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/2007/03/23/republic-act-no-9406/>

- [39] Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines. (2010). Republic Act No. 9999: Free Legal Assistance Act of 2010. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/2010/02/23/republic-act-no-9999/>
- [40] Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines. (1987). The 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/constitutions/1987-constitution/>
- [41] O'Grady, S. (2022). Critical thinking in legal research. *Legal Research Methodologies*, 10(1), 88–104.
- [42] Parondo, R. M. (2021). Intergenerational dynamics and workplace performance in Philippine professional organizations. *Journal of Management and Development Studies*, 10(1), 77–92.
- [43] Reyes, A. P. (2023). Organizational and research competencies of paralegals: Effects on performance in public vs. private law offices. *Philippine Journal of Legal Studies*, 15(2), 87–105.
- [44] Reyes, D. C. (2023). Building professional identity: The role of paralegal organizations in the Philippine justice system. *Philippine Law and Society Review*, 12(1), 55–71.
- [45] Reyes, L. A. (2022). Ethical foundations of paralegal practice: Toward professional accountability in the Philippines. *Philippine Law Journal*, 96(2), 301–320.
- [46] Rhode, D. L. (2022). *Legal ethics and professionalism: A handbook for lawyers and paralegals*. Oxford University Press.
- [47] Santos, G. R. (2023). Ethics and legitimacy in paralegal work: Foundations for public trust and professional recognition. *Ateneo Law Journal*, 67(1), 89–112.
- [48] Santos, M. L. (2022). Competency-based training for paralegals: Addressing skills gaps in Philippine legal services. *Journal of Philippine Legal Studies*, 17(2), 101–118.
- [49] Saro, J. M., Apat, J. Q., and Pareja, M. S. (2023). A descriptive-correlational study of the teachers' motivation, competences, and perceptions in writing action research. *Journal of Advanced Education and Philosophy*, 7(1), 14–24.
- [50] Scheier, M. (2021). *The quest for professionalization: A twentieth-century cautionary tale for United States stage managers* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign). ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.
- [51] Supreme Court of the Philippines. (2022). Judiciary modernization program: Enhancing efficiency through digital and case management systems. Supreme Court of the Philippines. <https://sc.judiciary.gov.ph/modernization-program>
- [52] Susskind, R., and Susskind, D. (2022). *Online courts and the future of justice*. Oxford University Press.
- [53] University of the Philippines Law Center. (2025). Paralegal training program [Program overview]. University of the Philippines Law Center. <https://paralegal.law.upd.edu.ph>
- [54] Villanueva, M. R. (2023). Enhancing public trust: Legal recognition of paralegals in the Philippine justice system. *Journal of Law and Policy Review*, 15(1), 77–94.
- [55] Villanueva, R. G. (2020). Competency over gender: Assessing performance in legal and paralegal services. *Journal of Philippine Legal Studies*, 15(2), 101–115.
- [56] Virtual Staffing. (2024). What we can do for you: Comprehensive legal support services. Retrieved September 1, 2025, from <https://www.virtualstaffing.com/paralegals>
- [57] Wilensky, H. L. (2021). The professionalization of everyone. *American Journal of Sociology*, 70(2), 137–158.
- [58] Zale, M. (2020). Effective delegation and supervision in law firms. *Law Practice Management Journal*, 46(2), 112–125.
- [59] Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri. (2019, September 23). Senate Bill No. 1071: An Act Professionalizing Paralegal Practice in the Philippines, Creating for This Purpose a Professional Regulatory Board of Paralegals, Appropriating Funds Therefor and for Other Purposes (18th Cong.). Senate of the Philippines. <https://web.senate.gov.ph/lisdata/3159028436!.pdf>