

Procedural Compliance and Evidence Documentation Quality in National Bureau of Investigation Casework

Leopoldo T. Allabo Jr^{1*} and Glenda G. Mina^{1,2}

¹Northeastern College

*caloyallabojr@gmail.com, ²minaglenda@yahoo.com

Date Submitted:

April 10, 2026

Date Accepted:

May 27, 2026

Date Published:

June 11, 2026

DOI:

10.5281/zenodo.20643947

ABSTRACT

This study addressed the continuing need to strengthen investigative accountability by determining the relationship between procedural compliance and evidence documentation quality in National Bureau of Investigation casework. Using a compliance documentation analytic design, the study gathered data from NBI personnel with direct involvement in investigative procedures, case documentation, evidence handling, and case file preparation at the Bayombong District Office. A validated and reliability-tested researcher-made instrument was used, with excellent internal consistency for procedural compliance, evidence documentation quality, and the overall scale. Data were analyzed using weighted mean, standard deviation, Kendall's tau-b correlation, and Somers' delta to determine both

the level and directional association of the variables. Findings showed that procedural compliance was high, with case intake procedures as the strongest area and timely completion of investigative actions as the main concern. Evidence documentation quality was also high, particularly in completeness and accuracy of records, while traceability of evidence movement and timeliness of documentation required closer attention. Kendall's tau-b revealed a strong positive and significant relationship between procedural compliance and evidence documentation quality. Somers' delta further indicated a substantial directional association, showing that stronger compliance with procedures was linked to better documentation outcomes. The study concluded that NBI casework in the locale demonstrated a dependable procedural and documentation system, but improvements were needed in custody tracking, documentation timeliness, and consistent procedural follow-through.

Keywords: *accountability, casework, documentation quality, evidence handling, procedural compliance, traceability*

INTRODUCTION

Criminal investigation depends not only on the ability of investigators to identify facts, locate persons, and recover evidence, but also on the discipline with which investigative procedures are followed and recorded. In casework handled by the National Bureau of Investigation, procedural compliance is more than an administrative requirement. It is a safeguard that protects the credibility of the investigation, the integrity of evidence, and the public value of forensic and investigative work. The modernization of the National Bureau of Investigation under Republic Act No. 10867 recognized the growing demands of investigative and detective work in the Philippines, including the need for better investigative capability, scientific laboratories, modern equipment, and trained personnel (Republic Act No. 10867, 2016). This legal mandate places strong importance on the quality of investigative processes, especially in offices where casework involves the collection, handling, documentation, and presentation of evidence for prosecutorial and judicial purposes.

Evidence documentation is a central part of this responsibility because the value of evidence is weakened when its origin, condition, handling, transfer, and preservation cannot be clearly shown. In criminal investigation, evidence must be linked to a specific event, person, place, or act through records that are complete, accurate, timely, and traceable. The chain of custody is widely treated as one of the most important components of evidence documentation because it accounts for the movement, control, transfer, analysis, and disposition of physical or electronic evidence from the point of collection until presentation in legal proceedings (Badiye et al., 2023). When documentation is incomplete, delayed, inconsistent, or unclear, questions may arise regarding the authenticity of evidence, the possibility of contamination or tampering, and the reliability of the investigative findings. In this sense, documentation quality is not separate from investigative quality. It is one of the visible measures of whether the investigation was conducted with care, accountability, and respect for due process.

The concern becomes more important in the present investigative environment where casework may involve physical evidence, documentary evidence, digital materials, biological samples, financial records, communications data, and other forms of information that require careful preservation. Modern forensic practice emphasizes that the chain of custody must document every transfer of evidence from one person to another, including the circumstances of collection, the persons who handled the item, the conditions of storage, and the manner by which evidence was delivered to the next authorized custodian (D'Anna et al., 2023). This means that the investigator's work does not end with the recovery of an item or the preparation of a report. It continues through proper labeling, sealing, photographing, inventorying, recording, endorsement, storage, and turnover. These steps may appear routine, but they become critical when a case is reviewed by prosecutors, questioned by defense counsel, evaluated by the court, or examined internally for administrative accountability.

International standards also point to the need for systematic and quality-based practices in forensic and laboratory-related work. ISO/IEC 17025:2017 sets general requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories and is often used as a benchmark for reliable laboratory operations, quality management, technical competence, and confidence in test results (International Organization for Standardization, 2017). Although investigative casework includes activities beyond laboratory testing, the same quality principles are relevant to evidence documentation because investigative records must support accuracy, traceability, impartiality, and defensible findings. Similarly, the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology stressed the need for scientific validity and reliability in forensic evidence used in criminal courts, particularly where conclusions may strongly influence judicial outcomes (President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, 2016). These standards and policy discussions show that the strength of a criminal case is closely tied to the quality of the processes that produced, preserved, and documented the evidence.

The 2019 Amendments to the Revised Rules on Evidence further highlight the importance of presenting evidence in a manner that satisfies rules on admissibility, authentication, relevance, and reliability (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 2019). For investigative agencies such as the National Bureau of Investigation, this makes procedural compliance an essential bridge between field investigation and legal evaluation. A well-documented case file allows the facts of the investigation to be followed in a clear sequence. It helps show who collected the evidence, when and where it was collected, how it was preserved, who received it, what examination was requested, and how it remained protected from unauthorized access or alteration. Without this level of documentation, even evidence that appears relevant may lose weight because the record does not sufficiently support its integrity.

This study is attached to the practical and institutional need to strengthen the connection between investigative procedure and documentation quality. It focuses on how compliance with established procedures may relate to the quality of evidence documentation in NBI casework, particularly in terms of completeness, accuracy, timeliness, consistency, traceability, and reliability of records. For an investigator, these matters are not merely clerical concerns. They reflect the discipline of the investigative process and the seriousness with which the rights of parties, the demands of justice, and the credibility of the Bureau are protected.

For the NBI Bayombong District Office and similar field offices, the study is relevant because district-level casework often requires investigators to balance field realities with legal and procedural expectations. Investigators must respond to complaints, conduct interviews, prepare reports, coordinate with laboratories and prosecutors,

preserve evidence, and maintain records under time pressure and operational constraints. Studying procedural compliance and evidence documentation quality can help identify areas where practices are already strong and areas where additional guidance, training, monitoring, or standardization may be needed. In this way, the study may contribute to improving case preparation, reducing avoidable procedural weaknesses, and strengthening the evidentiary value of NBI investigations.

More importantly, the study recognizes that public trust in investigative institutions is built through consistent, careful, and accountable work. When evidence is properly documented, case records become easier to review, defend, and understand. When procedures are faithfully followed, investigative actions become more transparent and less vulnerable to doubt. Procedural compliance and evidence documentation quality therefore serve a shared purpose: they help ensure that criminal investigation is not only active and responsive, but also fair, reliable, and worthy of confidence.

Literature Review

Procedural Compliance in Investigative Casework

Procedural compliance in investigative casework refers to the faithful observance of established rules, protocols, and professional standards from the first receipt of information to the final preparation of the case record. In criminal investigation, compliance is important because each step taken by the investigator may later be examined in terms of legality, fairness, reliability, and consistency. The literature on forensic standards shows that procedures are not merely internal office routines, but formal safeguards that help ensure that forensic and investigative activities are performed by competent personnel, under defined methods, with records that can be reviewed and defended. Wilson-Wilde (2018) explained that the international development of forensic science standards has been shaped by the need to promote consistency, competence, and reliability across forensic services. In the same direction, He (2022) emphasized that forensic standards support different stages of the forensic process, including crime scene investigation, evidence extraction, examination, and technical operations. For NBI casework, this means that procedural compliance must be understood as a discipline that connects field investigation, evidence handling, report preparation, laboratory coordination, and case endorsement. When procedures are followed consistently, the investigator can show not only what was done, but also why and how it was done in accordance with accepted investigative practice.

Evidence Documentation as a Measure of Casework Quality

Evidence documentation is one of the clearest indicators of casework quality because it preserves the history of the evidence and allows supervisors, prosecutors, courts, and other authorized reviewers to examine the reliability of the investigative process. Recent forensic quality literature shows that documentation is a central part of a quality management system because it records policies, procedures, case actions, evidence handling, reports, complaints, corrective actions, and internal review. Rosenberg et al. (2023) explained that accreditation of forensic units requires a documentation framework that supports quality management, including procedures for recognizing, recording, collecting, transporting, and storing forensic evidence. Heavey et al. (2023) also found that the proper recording and management of quality issues in forensic science help promote transparency, reliability, and continuous improvement, while inconsistent reporting may prevent agencies from identifying weaknesses in their processes. In this view, evidence documentation quality is not limited to the neatness or completeness of forms. It includes accuracy, traceability, timeliness, consistency, and the ability of records to explain the movement and condition of evidence. For NBI investigators, high-quality documentation supports the credibility of the case file and reduces avoidable doubts about the integrity of the evidence.

Investigative Interviewing, Information Reliability, and Record Accuracy

Investigative casework often depends on information gathered from complainants, witnesses, suspects, victims, and other persons who may help establish the facts of a case. Because of this, procedural compliance also extends to how interviews are planned, conducted, documented, and evaluated. Current literature on investigative

interviewing favors structured, ethical, and non-coercive methods because these approaches improve the reliability of information and reduce the risk of false, incomplete, or biased accounts. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2024) emphasized that investigative interviewing should be grounded in fairness, accuracy, impartiality, and respect for rights, allowing interviewees to narrate their accounts before inconsistencies are explored. Snook et al. (2021) similarly argued that investigative interviewing is a practical method for collecting reliable and relevant information through a structured conversation rather than through confession-driven questioning. For documentation quality, this is important because the written record of an interview must accurately reflect what was asked, what was answered, what evidence was discussed, and what clarifications were made. In NBI casework, poor interview documentation may weaken the connection between testimonial information and physical, documentary, or digital evidence. On the other hand, careful interview records can strengthen the factual narrative of the case and support the investigator's explanation of how the evidence was evaluated.

Digital Evidence, Traceability, and Emerging Documentation Challenges

The increasing use of digital devices, online communication, electronic transactions, surveillance systems, and cloud-based records has made evidence documentation more complex in modern investigative casework. Unlike many physical items, digital evidence can be copied, altered, deleted, transferred, or accessed remotely, which makes traceability and preservation especially important. Sunde (2022) noted that digital traces may be flexible in meaning because they can be interpreted in different narrative contexts, making careful evaluation and documentation necessary to avoid misleading conclusions. Nath et al. (2024) further explained that digital evidence chain of custody remains vital to trustworthiness and admissibility, but contemporary practice now involves paper-based, system-oriented, and infrastructure-driven methods for preserving the integrity of digital evidence. In the Philippine context, digital evidence also requires attention to lawful procedures, especially when investigators seek disclosure, search, seizure, interception, or examination of computer data under the Rule on Cybercrime Warrants (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 2018). For NBI casework, these developments show that documentation quality must keep pace with the nature of evidence being handled. Investigators must be able to record not only who handled the evidence, but also how data were obtained, preserved, copied, stored, analyzed, and protected from unauthorized access or alteration.

METHODS

Research Design

The study used a compliance documentation analytic design. This design was selected because the study did not merely describe perceptions, but examined how procedural compliance corresponded with the quality of evidence documentation in investigative casework. The design allowed the researcher to assess operational practices, documentation behaviors, and quality indicators as they appeared in the handling and recording of case-related evidence. It was appropriate for the study because procedural compliance and evidence documentation quality were treated as measurable institutional practices that could be examined through structured responses and systematically interpreted indicators. The design also provided a practical basis for identifying procedural areas that supported strong documentation and those that required further improvement in investigative case management.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in the National Bureau of Investigation, Bayombong District Office. The locale was appropriate because the office handled investigative functions that involved complaint intake, evidence handling, interview documentation, coordination with other agencies, preparation of case records, and endorsement of documents for further legal action. As a district office, it represented an operational setting where investigators were expected to observe prescribed procedures while responding to actual casework demands. The setting also

provided a suitable context for examining how procedural discipline was reflected in the preparation, preservation, and management of evidence documentation.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The participants of the study were NBI personnel who had direct knowledge of investigative procedures, case documentation, evidence handling, or case file preparation. They were selected because their work exposure allowed them to provide informed assessments of procedural compliance and documentation practices in casework. The study used purposive operational sampling. This technique was applied because the participants had to possess relevant involvement in investigative or documentation-related functions rather than being selected only through general availability. The selection focused on personnel whose duties gave them practical familiarity with case processing, recording requirements, evidence custody, and documentation review.

Research Instrument

The study used a researcher-made survey instrument developed from the major variables of the study. The instrument was divided into sections that measured procedural compliance and evidence documentation quality. Procedural compliance covered indicators such as adherence to case intake procedures, observance of evidence handling protocols, proper coordination, timely completion of required actions, and consistency in following investigative standards. Evidence documentation quality covered indicators such as completeness, accuracy, timeliness, traceability, consistency, and clarity of case records. The items were written in a formal and work-based manner to reflect the actual documentation and procedural responsibilities of investigative personnel.

The instrument underwent content validation by experts with background in criminal investigation, research methodology, and public administration. Their evaluation focused on item clarity, relevance, alignment with the study variables, and suitability to the NBI casework context. Revisions were made based on their comments, particularly in improving the wording of items, removing overlapping statements, and making the indicators more specific to evidence documentation. A pilot test was then conducted among personnel who had comparable investigative or documentation functions but were not included in the final administration of the instrument. The pilot test helped determine whether the items were understandable, properly sequenced, and suitable for the intended respondents.

Reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha. The procedural compliance scale obtained a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.91, while the evidence documentation quality scale obtained a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.93. The overall instrument obtained a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.94, which indicated excellent internal consistency. These results showed that the instrument was reliable for measuring the key constructs of the study.

Data Gathering

Permission to conduct the study was secured from the appropriate authority before data collection. After approval was granted, the researcher coordinated with the concerned office to identify the appropriate schedule and manner of administering the instrument. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, and the confidentiality of their responses. The survey instrument was then distributed to the qualified participants. Sufficient time was given for them to answer the items carefully and honestly. After retrieval, the completed instruments were checked for completeness and consistency of responses. The data were encoded, reviewed, and prepared for statistical analysis.

Data Analysis

The study used descriptive and relational data analysis. Weighted mean and standard deviation were used to determine the level of procedural compliance and the level of evidence documentation quality. The weighted mean was used to describe the general extent of practice, while the standard deviation was used to examine the consistency of responses.

To determine the relationship between procedural compliance and evidence documentation quality, Kendall's tau-b correlation was used. This treatment was selected because the data were drawn from ordered

response categories and because it was appropriate for examining the strength and direction of association between two ranked variables. Kendall's tau-b was considered more suitable than the usual Pearson correlation because the responses were ordinal in nature and may not fully satisfy the assumptions required for parametric testing.

To provide a more focused interpretation of the findings, Somers' delta was also used as a directional measure of association. This allowed the study to determine whether higher procedural compliance was associated with better evidence documentation quality in a directional manner. This treatment was appropriate because the study considered procedural compliance as the explanatory variable and evidence documentation quality as the outcome variable. The combination of Kendall's tau-b and Somers' delta gave the analysis a stronger basis for interpreting both the strength and direction of the relationship between the two variables.

Ethical Consideration

The study observed ethical standards throughout the conduct of the research. Approval was obtained from the proper authority before data collection. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the nature of their involvement, and their right to decline or withdraw without penalty. No personal or sensitive case details were collected. The study did not require the disclosure of confidential case information, names of parties, docket details, evidence descriptions, or operational matters that could compromise ongoing or completed investigations. Responses were treated with strict confidentiality and were used only for academic research purposes.

The researcher also ensured that the study did not interfere with official duties or office operations. The participants answered the instrument based on general casework practices and not on specific confidential cases. All gathered data were stored securely and were reported only in summarized form. The identity of the participants and the office-level responses were protected from unauthorized disclosure. In this way, the study respected professional boundaries, institutional confidentiality, and the ethical responsibilities attached to research involving law enforcement and investigative personnel.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. *Level of Procedural Compliance in NBI Casework*

Indicators of Procedural Compliance	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Descriptive Interpretation
Adherence to case intake procedures	4.28	0.51	Very High
Observance of evidence handling protocols	4.19	0.56	High
Proper coordination with concerned units and agencies	4.07	0.62	High
Timely completion of required investigative actions	3.74	0.71	High
Consistency in following investigative standards	3.89	0.67	High
Overall Mean	4.03	0.61	High

Table 1 shows that procedural compliance in NBI casework was rated high overall, with an overall mean of 4.03. This means that established procedures were generally followed in the handling of investigative tasks. Among the indicators, adherence to case intake procedures received the highest mean of 4.28, interpreted as very high. This suggests that personnel were most consistent in receiving, recording, and initially processing complaints and case-related information. This result reflects a strong front-end compliance practice, which is important because the first stage of casework sets the direction for succeeding investigative actions.

However, the lowest mean was observed in the timely completion of required investigative actions, with a mean of 3.74. Although still interpreted as high, this result points to a practical concern. It suggests that while personnel were aware of procedural requirements, the completion of some required actions may have been affected by workload, availability of documents, coordination delays, or the need to wait for supporting information from other units or agencies. Consistency in following investigative standards also obtained a lower mean compared with

the other indicators, which indicates that procedures were followed but may not have been applied with equal strength across all case situations. This finding shows that the office had a generally compliant casework environment, but there remained areas where standardization and monitoring could still be improved.

Table 2. Level of Evidence Documentation Quality in NBI Casework

Indicators of Evidence Documentation Quality	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Descriptive Interpretation
Completeness of evidence records	4.11	0.58	High
Accuracy of recorded evidence details	4.05	0.60	High
Timeliness of documentation	3.68	0.76	High
Traceability of evidence movement and custody	3.62	0.79	High
Consistency of documentation entries	3.81	0.70	High
Clarity of case records	3.96	0.65	High
Overall Mean	3.87	0.68	High

Table 2 presents the level of evidence documentation quality in NBI casework. The overall mean of 3.87 indicates a high level of documentation quality. This means that evidence records were generally prepared in a manner that supported case review, evidence monitoring, and investigative accountability. Completeness of evidence records obtained the highest mean of 4.11, showing that the needed documents, entries, and supporting details were usually available in the case file. Accuracy of recorded evidence details also received a high mean of 4.05, indicating that the information written in evidence-related documents was generally dependable.

Despite these strengths, the lower means for timeliness of documentation and traceability of evidence movement and custody reveal areas that needed closer attention. Timeliness of documentation obtained a mean of 3.68, while traceability received a mean of 3.62. These results suggest that while documentation was usually completed, there were instances when records may not have been updated immediately or when the movement of evidence may not have been recorded with the same level of detail at every stage. This is a meaningful concern in investigative casework because delays or gaps in documentation may create questions about when an action was performed, who handled the evidence, and how the item was preserved. The results therefore show that documentation quality was generally strong, but the weaker areas were connected to the speed and continuity of recording rather than to the absence of documentation itself.

Table 3. Relationship Between Procedural Compliance and Evidence Documentation Quality Using Kendall's Tau-b

Variables Tested	Kendall's Tau-b	p-value	Strength of Relationship	Decision
Procedural compliance and evidence documentation quality	0.61	0.000	Strong positive relationship	Significant

Table 3 shows the relationship between procedural compliance and evidence documentation quality using Kendall's tau-b. The result produced a correlation coefficient of 0.61 with a p-value of 0.000. Since the p-value was lower than the 0.05 level of significance, the relationship between the two variables was statistically significant. The coefficient also indicates a strong positive relationship. This means that higher procedural compliance was associated with better evidence documentation quality.

This result confirms that evidence documentation quality improved when investigative procedures were followed more consistently. In practical terms, personnel who were more compliant with case intake procedures, evidence handling protocols, coordination requirements, timely investigative actions, and investigative standards also tended to produce better documentation in terms of completeness, accuracy, timeliness, traceability, consistency, and clarity. The finding is important because it shows that documentation quality cannot be treated as a separate clerical function. It is closely connected to the quality of procedural performance during the investigation.

At the same time, the result also explains why some documentation concerns remained visible. Since procedural compliance was high but not perfect, documentation quality was also high but still had weaker points. The lower ratings in timeliness and traceability may be understood as effects of procedural gaps, especially when

actions were completed but not immediately recorded, or when coordination and evidence turnover were not documented with full continuity. Thus, the result supports the need to strengthen procedural discipline as a way to improve documentation quality.

Table 4. *Directional Association Between Procedural Compliance and Evidence Documentation Quality Using Somers' Delta*

Explanatory Variable	Outcome Variable	Somers' Delta	p-value	Interpretation
Procedural compliance	Evidence documentation quality	0.58	0.000	Substantial directional association

Table 4 presents the directional association between procedural compliance and evidence documentation quality using Somers' delta. The result showed a Somers' delta value of 0.58 with a p-value of 0.000. This indicates a substantial and statistically significant directional association. Since procedural compliance was treated as the explanatory variable and evidence documentation quality as the outcome variable, the result means that stronger compliance with procedures was associated with higher quality of evidence documentation.

This finding gives further support to the view that evidence documentation improved when personnel followed clear procedural steps. It also suggests that weaknesses in documentation were not merely writing or recording problems. They were connected to how procedures were carried out, monitored, and completed during actual casework. When protocols were followed, records became more complete, accurate, and understandable. When procedural follow-through was less consistent, documentation became more vulnerable to delay, uneven entries, or unclear evidence movement.

The result is especially relevant to NBI casework because evidence documentation must support both internal accountability and legal defensibility. Even when evidence is properly obtained, its value may be affected if records do not clearly show the sequence of custody, handling, and preservation. The substantial Somers' delta result therefore indicates that improving procedural compliance may serve as a practical route toward improving documentation quality. This can be done through clearer checklists, periodic review of case folders, standardized evidence turnover logs, and closer monitoring of documentation timelines.

Table 5. *Summary of Targeted Results*

Targeted Result	Key Finding	Interpretation
Level of procedural compliance	Overall mean of 4.03	Procedural compliance was high
Strongest area in procedural compliance	Case intake procedures	Initial case processing was the most established practice
Weakest area in procedural compliance	Timely completion of required investigative actions	Delays remained a practical concern
Level of evidence documentation quality	Overall mean of 3.87	Evidence documentation quality was high
Strongest area in documentation quality	Completeness of evidence records	Required documentation was generally available
Weakest area in documentation quality	Traceability of evidence movement and custody	Custody movement records needed closer attention
Relationship between the variables	Kendall's tau-b = 0.61, p = 0.000	Procedural compliance had a strong positive relationship with documentation quality
Directional association	Somers' delta = 0.58, p = 0.000	Better procedural compliance substantially predicted better documentation quality

Table 5 summarizes the targeted results of the study. The findings show that both procedural compliance and evidence documentation quality were rated high, which indicates that NBI casework practices were generally performed with order, discipline, and attention to required documentation. The strongest procedural area was case intake, suggesting that the first stage of case handling was already well structured. In terms of documentation,

completeness received the strongest rating, which means that the required evidence records were generally present and available for review.

However, the summary also shows that the main problem was found in the continuity and timing of documentation. Timely completion of investigative actions was the lowest-rated procedural indicator, while traceability of evidence movement and custody was the lowest-rated documentation indicator. This pattern suggests that the office did not have a serious absence of compliance or documentation, but it had areas where follow-through needed improvement. The problem was not whether procedures and records existed. Rather, the issue was whether actions were completed promptly and whether each movement of evidence was recorded with complete continuity.

The relational results further strengthen this interpretation. The significant Kendall's tau-b result shows that procedural compliance and documentation quality moved together in a positive direction. The significant Somers' delta result adds that procedural compliance had a substantial directional association with documentation quality. These findings mean that improving compliance practices is likely to improve the quality of evidence documentation. Overall, the study revealed a generally strong casework system with specific areas that required refinement, particularly in documentation timeliness, evidence traceability, and consistent procedural follow-through.

CONCLUSION

Procedural compliance in National Bureau of Investigation casework was generally strong, showing that investigative personnel observed required processes in case intake, evidence handling, coordination, and case file preparation, although delays in completing some investigative actions and uneven consistency in applying standards remained noticeable concerns. Evidence documentation quality was also high, particularly in the completeness and accuracy of records, but the findings showed that documentation timeliness and traceability of evidence movement and custody still needed improvement. The significant results of Kendall's tau-b and Somers' delta confirmed that stronger procedural compliance was associated with better evidence documentation quality, which means that documentation problems were not merely clerical issues but were closely connected to how investigative procedures were followed and monitored. Based on these findings, it is recommended that the NBI Bayombong District Office strengthen its procedural monitoring through a standardized compliance checklist, improve custody movement logs, require timely updating of documentation entries, and conduct periodic internal review of case folders before endorsement. Refresher training may also be provided on evidence handling, chain of custody recording, documentation clarity, and case file quality control, while future researchers may expand the study to other NBI district offices to compare procedural and documentation practices across different operational settings.

References

- Badiye, A., Kapoor, N., & Menezes, R. G. (2023). Chain of custody. In *StatPearls*. StatPearls Publishing.
- D'Anna, T., Puntarello, M., Cannella, G., Scalzo, G., Buscemi, R., Zerbo, S., & Argo, A. (2023). The chain of custody in the era of modern forensics: From the classic procedures for gathering evidence to the new challenges related to digital data. *Healthcare*, 11(5), Article 634. <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare11050634>
- He, X., & Li, C. (2022). Development of forensic standards in China: A review. *Forensic Sciences Research*, 7(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20961790.2021.1912877>
- Heavey, A. L., Turbett, G. R., Houck, M. M., & Lewis, S. W. (2023). Management and disclosure of quality issues in forensic science: A survey of current practice in Australia and New Zealand. *Forensic Science International: Synergy*, 6, Article 100339. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fsisyn.2023.100339>
- International Organization for Standardization. (2017). *ISO/IEC 17025:2017: General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories*. International Organization for Standardization.
- Jones, N. S., & Forry, E. P. (2023). *Demystifying accreditation: A framework for accreditation of forensic units* (NIST GCR 23-043). National Institute of Standards and Technology. <https://doi.org/10.6028/NIST.GCR.23-043>

- Nath, S., Summers, K., Baek, J., & Ahn, G.-J. (2024). Digital evidence chain of custody: Navigating new realities of digital forensics. In *2024 IEEE 6th International Conference on Trust, Privacy and Security in Intelligent Systems, and Applications (TPS-ISA)* (pp. 11–20). IEEE. <https://doi.org/10.1109/TPS-ISA62245.2024.00012>
- President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology. (2016). *Forensic science in criminal courts: Ensuring scientific validity of feature-comparison methods*. Executive Office of the President of the United States.
- Republic Act No. 10867. (2016). *National Bureau of Investigation Reorganization and Modernization Act*. Republic of the Philippines.
- Snook, B., Luther, K., Quinlan, H., & Milne, R. (2021). What is investigative interviewing and what is it not? A primer on the science and practice. *Journal of Criminal Psychology, 11*(4), 283–294. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCP-04-2021-0024>
- Sunde, N. (2022). Unpacking the evidence elasticity of digital traces. *Cogent Social Sciences, 8*(1), Article 2103946. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2022.2103946>
- Supreme Court of the Philippines. (2018). *Rule on Cybercrime Warrants, A.M. No. 17-11-03-SC*. Supreme Court of the Philippines.
- Supreme Court of the Philippines. (2019). *2019 Amendments to the 1989 Revised Rules on Evidence, A.M. No. 19-08-15-SC*. Supreme Court of the Philippines.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2024). *Manual on investigative interviewing for criminal investigation*. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.
- Wilson-Wilde, L. (2018). The international development of forensic science standards: A review. *Forensic Science International, 288*, 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.forsciint.2018.04.009>