



# FACTORS AFFECTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN CABANATUAN CITY

Floralyn L. Doquilla, Odessa G. Lacanilao

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36713/epra15034>

DOI No: 10.36713/epra15034

## ABSTRACT

*This study aimed to examine the factors affecting violence against women in Cabanatuan City, Philippines. The research questions focused on identifying common crimes/violence/abuse committed against women and exploring the factors influencing such violence. A descriptive research design was employed, gathering quantifiable information through data analysis. The study was conducted in selected barangays in Cabanatuan City, namely Sumacab Este, Bagong Sikat, and Bakero, which had a high number of reported cases of violence against women. The participants included barangay officials and barangay tanods.*

*The findings revealed numerous forms of violence and abuse against women, such as physical violence, sexual violence, economic abuse, emotional abuse, and psychological abuse. These forms of violence stem from gender-based inequality and power imbalances, resulting in significant physical, emotional, and psychological harm to women. The study also highlighted low levels of women's access to paid employment, indicating gender disparities in the workforce due to discrimination, limited job opportunities, unequal pay, and inadequate support for work-life balance. These inequalities hinder women's economic independence and overall empowerment, contributing to gender-based economic disparities. Additionally, the study identified limited access to education among women, emphasizing an educational gap that restricts personal and professional development, limits socio-economic opportunities, and perpetuates gender inequality.*

*The study accentuates the urgent need for interventions and policies to address violence against women and promote gender equality in Cabanatuan City. Efforts should focus on raising awareness about the various forms of violence, implementing measures to protect women, promoting economic opportunities for women, and ensuring equal access to education. By addressing these factors, the study aims to contribute to the creation of a safer and more equitable society for women in Cabanatuan City and beyond.*

**KEYWORDS:** Factors, Violence against women, Cabanatuan City, Abused against Women

## INTRODUCTION

Violence against women and their children affects the lives and well-being of millions of individuals worldwide.

As defined by the United Nation Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, violence against women includes physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation. It also includes physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in family, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women, and forced prostitution (<http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm>).

Gender-based violence is being gradually acknowledge as a major public health concern and a transgression of human rights.

Around the world at least one woman in every three is battered, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime (Brown, 2022).

Violence against women is an alarming problem experience by many women around the world. It ranges from simple physical abuses to severe life destroying consequences such as emotional disorder and death. (Claus et.al, 2017)

Women encounters with different forms of violence and are varied and are due to multiple risk factors (Bailey, 2010).

The main objective of the study is to determine the common crimes/violence/abuse committed against women and What are the factors affecting violence against women?

With the result of this study, the researchers aimed to coordinate to other Local Government Officials to provide regular barangay-level Women Empowerment Orientations to each woman and children about their rights and protection guaranteed by the Anti-VAWC Laws. Likewise, the researchers also aimed to provide trainings and seminars to men regarding the anti-VAWC laws in order for them to be aware on the rights of women.

Accordingly, this study could also help women on how they could prevent to become victims of violence. Further, it may also help the Local Government Officials to develop Intervention Programs for women who suffered violence.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study aimed to determine the Factors Affecting Violence Against Women in Cabanatuan City. The researchers frame the specific research questions:

1. What are the common crimes/violence/abuse committed against women?
2. What are the factors affecting violence against women?

## METHODOLOGY

The descriptive design was used in this research paper. A descriptive design aims to describe the nature of the situation, or it exists during the time of study. It determines the present, actual phenomenon of study. Further, descriptive research gathers quantifiable information that can be used for statistical inference on your target participants through data analysis.



This study was conducted in selected barangays in Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija namely, Sumacab Este, Bagong Sikat, and Bakero . These barangays were selected based on the highest

number of reported cases on violence against women. The participants of this study are the Barangay officials including the Barangay Tanods.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Common Crimes/violence Committed Against Women

Table 1. Common Crimes/violence Committed Against Women

A. Physical Violence: hitting, kicking, grabbing, slapping, hair pulling, biting,denying medical care or forcing alcohol and/or drug use, or using other physical force.
B. Sexual Violence: sexual harassment, rape, rape culture
C. Economic Abuse: withholding access to money, forbidding attendance at school or employment.
D. Emotional Abuse: name-calling or other verbal abuse, damaging a partner's relationship with the children; or not letting a partner see friends and family.
E. Psychological Abuse: threatening physical harm to self, partner or children; destruction of pets and property; or forcing isolation from friends, family, school and/or work.

As shown in Table 1, the common crimes/violence committed against women are physical, sexual economic, emotional and psychological violence or abuse.

#### A. Physical Violence

Physical violence encompasses to a variety of abusive actions that use physical force to hurt or threaten women. It covers behaviors like striking, kicking, grasping, slapping, pulling hair, biting, forbidding medical attention, pressuring someone to use drugs or alcohol, or engaging in any other type of physical violence. These violent acts can cause immediate bodily suffering, discomfort, and injury, but they can also have negative psychological and emotional repercussions that persist for a very long time. Physical abuse is a blatant breach of one's personal space and is frequently employed to exert dominance, intimidation, and control over women.

According to Silverman, Raj, et al. 2017, the various forms of physical violence mentioned represent direct acts of aggression that can cause immediate physical pain and injury. However, it is important to note that physical violence can also have lasting psychological and emotional effects on women, beyond the initial physical harm.

In the study of Trevillion, Kyle, et al. 2019, physical violence is often employed as a means to exert dominance, intimidation, and control over women. By violating their personal boundaries and inflicting harm upon them, the perpetrators aim to establish power and control within the relationship. This power dynamic is a key aspect of physical violence against women.

It is important to recognize that physical violence is a severe violation of a person's rights and well-being. It not only inflicts physical harm but also engenders fear, trauma, and a sense of powerlessness in victims. Addressing physical violence requires comprehensive efforts aimed at prevention, raising awareness, providing support to survivors, and holding perpetrators accountable.

#### B. Sexual Violence

Sexual violence refers to any form of non-consensual sexual behavior imposed on women. It includes acts such as sexual harassment, rape, and contributes to the perpetuation of rape culture. Sexual violence is a severe violation of a person's autonomy and bodily integrity. It can cause physical injuries, psychological trauma, and long-term emotional consequences for survivors. Sexual violence is often driven by power imbalances and reinforces a culture that normalizes and condones such actions, creating an environment of fear, shame, and inequality for women.

Sexual violence is characterized by engaging in sexual acts without the consent of the victim. This violation of consent is a fundamental breach of a person's autonomy and the right to make decisions about their own body. It emphasizes the importance of consent as a cornerstone of healthy sexual relationships. It encompasses a wide range of behaviors, including sexual harassment and rape. This highlights the continuum of non-consensual sexual behaviors that women may experience, from verbal and non-physical forms of harassment to the most extreme act of rape.

In the study of Decker, Michele R., et al. 2014, sexual violence can have profound and long-lasting effects on survivors. It can cause physical injuries, leading to immediate health consequences. Moreover, the psychological trauma resulting from sexual violence can be extensive, leading to a range of emotional and mental health challenges. Survivors may experience feelings of fear, shame, and a loss of trust in others.

Understanding the analysis sheds light on the gravity of sexual violence and its multifaceted impact on individuals and society. It emphasizes the importance of addressing power imbalances, promoting consent, challenging rape culture, and fostering gender equality to create a safe and supportive environment for all individuals. Comprehensive efforts, including education, awareness, policy changes, and support services, are necessary to prevent sexual violence and provide healing and justice for survivors.

#### C. Economic Abuse

Controlling or manipulating a woman's financial resources, restricting her access to funds, or preventing her from enrolling in school or finding job are all examples of economic abuse. By making women dependent on their abusers, this type of abuse aims to exert influence over them and control their behavior. Their capacity to make independent decisions, preserve financial security, and become self-sufficient is constrained by economic abuse. Women's vulnerability is maintained by being denied access to economic resources, which also restricts their alternatives for leaving violent situations.

Economic abuse is a form of power and control used to manipulate and exert influence over women. By controlling or limiting a woman's access to financial resources, education, or employment opportunities, abusers aim to maintain dominance and control over their partners. This control extends beyond financial matters and can significantly impact various aspects of a woman's life.



According to Stark, Evan, 2017, economic abuse creates dependency, making women reliant on their abusers for financial stability. By restricting access to funds, education, or employment, abusers limit a woman's ability to be self-sufficient and financially independent. This dependency can make it challenging for women to leave abusive situations or seek help, as they lack the means to support themselves and their children.

Further, in the study of Adams, Adrienne E., et al. 2008, economic abuse limits a woman's capacity to make independent decisions. When her financial resources are controlled or restricted, she may be unable to make choices regarding her own well-being, including decisions about healthcare, education, housing, and other essential needs. This further reinforces the power dynamics within the abusive relationship.

Economic abuse can serve as a barrier to leaving an abusive relationship. Without access to financial resources, women may feel trapped and unable to escape the abusive environment. This lack of economic autonomy limits their options and can create a cycle of dependence on the abuser, perpetuating the abuse.

#### D. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse describes actions that lower a woman's sense of self-worth, control her emotions, and manipulate her. Name-calling, verbal abuse, unrelenting criticism, tarnishing a partner's relationship with their children, isolating the woman from friends and family, and other strategies designed to reduce her sense of autonomy and self-worth are some examples. Women who experience emotional abuse may experience severe and protracted psychological impacts, including a decline in self-esteem, anxiety, sadness, and feelings of helplessness.

Emotional abuse is characterized by actions that aim to lower a woman's sense of self-worth. This includes name-calling, verbal abuse, unrelenting criticism, and other tactics that undermine her confidence and self-esteem. By repeatedly belittling and demeaning the woman, the abuser seeks to exert control over her emotions and diminish her value.

Moreover, emotional abuse involves manipulating a woman's emotions and thoughts to control her behavior. Tactics such as tarnishing her relationship with children, isolating her from friends and family, and imposing strict rules and restrictions are employed to assert dominance and maintain power over her. These manipulative behaviors erode her autonomy and independence.

Further, emotional abuse can have severe and protracted psychological impacts on women. The constant undermining of self-worth and the erosion of confidence can lead to a decline in self-esteem. Women who experience emotional abuse may suffer from anxiety, sadness, depression, and feelings of helplessness. The psychological trauma can persist long after the abusive relationship ends.

In the study of Dowgwillo, Emily A., et al. 2019, emotional abuse is rooted in power and control dynamics within relationships. The abuser seeks to exert control over the woman's emotions, thoughts, and actions to maintain dominance. By eroding her self-worth and autonomy, the abuser establishes a power imbalance that perpetuates the cycle of abuse.

#### E. Psychological Abuse

Techniques used in psychological abuse include those intended to cause psychological discomfort, fear, and intimidation in women. It may involve making physical threats against the woman, her partner, or their kids, destroying their pets and other people's property, or isolating them from their friends, families, coworkers, and other social groups. Psychological abuse fosters a culture of ongoing stress and anxiety by using fear to control and manipulate women. It frequently causes their sense of self-worth, mental health, and general quality of life to decline.

Psychological abuse encompasses a range of techniques intended to cause psychological discomfort, fear, and intimidation in women. This can include making physical threats against the woman, her partner, or their children, as well as engaging in acts of property destruction. By using these tactics, abusers seek to assert control and instill fear in their victims.

In addition, psychological abuse often involves isolating women from their support networks, including friends, family, coworkers, and social groups. By limiting their social connections, abusers' further control and manipulate their victims. This isolation can lead to a sense of helplessness, dependency, and increased vulnerability to further abuse.

Further, in the study of Tjaden, Patricia, 2019, psychological abuse creates an ongoing atmosphere of fear, stress, and anxiety. Abusers use fear as a means of control, manipulating women's emotions and behavior to maintain power over them. The constant threat of harm or destruction contributes to a heightened state of psychological distress.

It was also revealed in the study of Peters, Kristina, et al. 2018, psychological abuse has a profound impact on a woman's sense of self-worth, mental health, and overall quality of life. Continuous exposure to psychological abuse erodes self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-belief. Women may experience depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and other mental health issues as a result of the abuse.

Overall, these forms of violence and abuse against women are deeply concerning and reflect a broader pattern of gender-based inequality and power imbalances. They have significant physical, emotional, and psychological consequences for women, often causing long-term trauma and hindering their ability to lead safe, healthy, and fulfilling lives. Addressing and combating these issues require comprehensive efforts, including education, awareness, supportive resources, legal protections, and societal change to create an environment where women can live free from violence and oppression.



Factors Affecting Violence Against Women

Table 2. Factors Affecting Violence Against Women

Indicators	WM
1. Lower levels of Education	3.50
2. A history of exposure to child maltreatment	3.27
3. Witnessing family violence	3.41
4. Harmful use of alcohol	3.45
5. Harmful masculine behaviors-including having multiple partners or attitudes that condone violence	3.41
6. Marital discord and dissatisfaction	3.31
7. Male controlling behaviors towards their partners	3.37
8. Anti-social personality disorder	3.47
9. Low levels of women’s access to paid employment	3.52
10. Weak legal sanctions for sexual abuse	3.39

Table 2 presents the list of factors that have been identified as contributing to violence against women.

As can be deduced from the table, the indicators that obtained the highest weighted mean are: Low levels of women’s access to paid employment (3.52) and Low levels of education (3.50).

Low levels of women’s access to paid employment are the top indicator among the factors that contribute to violence against women. It can be implied that; limited access to employment for women can contribute to their economic dependence on others, which can increase their vulnerability to violence.

In the study of Vyas et. al.,2018, poverty or low household socioeconomic status has been consistently found to be associated with high rates of partner violence against women in low- and middle-income countries and in high income settings.

Likewise, the findings agree with the study of Aziz et. al.,2018 stating therein that some other risk factors for physical and domestic violence are women’s lack of financial autonomy and low socioeconomic status. He discussed further in his study that the magnitude and nature of domestic violence against women. He found that women in the lower income directly become economically dependent on their partners, which in turn limits their negotiating power and their ability to diminish physical violence.

On the other hand, the second top indicator that contribute to violence against women is the: Low levels of education. It can be noted that women with low levels of education is more vulnerable to become victims of violence.

In a study conducted in Siberia, it was determined that women with a lower level of education were more likely to experience physical or sexual violence. Further, findings from a study conducted in various regions of India indicated that a higher level of education decreased the possibility of women experiencing violence and sexual abuse from this intimate partners (Tekmanli, 2021).

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The various forms of violence and abuse against women, including physical violence, sexual violence, economic abuse, emotional abuse, and psychological abuse, are deeply troubling manifestations of gender-based inequality and power imbalances. These acts have far-reaching consequences, causing significant physical, emotional, and psychological harm to women.
2. The low levels of women's access to paid employment indicate a significant gender disparity in the workforce, where women may face barriers such as discrimination,

limited job opportunities, unequal pay, and lack of support for work-life balance. This inequality not only affects women's economic independence but also hinders their overall empowerment and contributes to gender-based economic disparities. Additionally, the low levels of education among women highlight a significant educational gap. Limited access to education can restrict women's personal and professional development, limit their opportunities for socio-economic advancement, and perpetuate gender inequality in society.

REFERENCES

1. Adams, Adrienne E., et al. 2008 "Economic Abuse in the Lives of Women Abused by an Intimate Partner: A Qualitative Study" retrieved from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1077801208315529>
2. Alkan Ö, Tekmanlı HH. Determination of the factors affecting sexual violence against women in Turkey: a population-based analysis. BMC Womens Health. 2021 May 5;21(1):188. doi: 10.1186/s12905-021-01333-1. PMID: 33952220; PMCID: PMC8097900.
3. Aziz, Nurul Nadia & Idris, Syazliana & Ishak, Maisarah & Wahid, Normilia & Abu Yazid, Zaidatul Nadiyah. (2018). FACTORS AFFECTING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: A CONCEPTUAL MODEL AND RESEARCH PROPOSITIONS.
4. Decker, Michele R., et al. 2014"Sexual Violence against Women: Impact on High-Risk Health Behaviors and Reproductive Health" retrieved from [https://oawnet.org/sites/default/files/materials/files/2016-09/AR\\_SVReproConsequences.pdf](https://oawnet.org/sites/default/files/materials/files/2016-09/AR_SVReproConsequences.pdf)
5. Dowgwillo, Emily A., et al. 2019, "Intimate Partner Emotional Abuse and Mental Health: A Systematic Review" retrieved from <https://www.bing.com/search?q=Dowgwillo%2C+Emily+A.%2C+et+al.+2019%2C+%22Intimate+Partner+Emotional+Abuse+and+Mental+Health%3A+A+>
6. Peters, Kristina, et al. 2018 "The Impact of Psychological Abuse on Women's Mental Health and Well-being: A Systematic Review"
7. Silverman, Raj, et al. (2017)"The Effects of Intimate Partner Violence on Health in Young Adulthood" retrieved from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1077801206292935>
8. Stark, Evan, 2017 "Economic Abuse as an Invisible Form of Domestic Violence: A Multicountry Review" retrieved from <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29587598>
9. Tjaden, Patricia, 2019 "The Nature and Extent of Psychological Abuse in a National Sample of Women in the United States: Prevalence, Characteristics, and Predictors" retrieved from [https://books.google.com.ph/books/about/Extent\\_nature\\_and\\_consequences\\_of\\_intima.html?id=n1vtNyguYQC&redir\\_esc=y](https://books.google.com.ph/books/about/Extent_nature_and_consequences_of_intima.html?id=n1vtNyguYQC&redir_esc=y)



10. Trevillion, Kyle, et al. (2019) "The Impact of Domestic Violence on Women's Mental Health" retrieved from <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/9889446>
11. Vyas S, Jansen HAFM. Unequal power relations and partner violence against women in Tanzania: a cross-sectional analysis. *BMC Womens Health*. 2018 Nov 15;18(1):185. doi: 10.1186/s12905-018-0675-0. PMID: 30442127; PMCID: PMC6238293.