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AWARENESS AND COMPETENCY OF VAWC DESK OFFICERS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF PINTUYAN, PROVINCE OF SOUTHERN LEYTE: BASIS FOR A DEVELOPMENT TRAINING PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

Violence against Women and Children (VAWC) remains a significant concern in municipal governance, demanding continuous attention and effective intervention strategies. This study aimed to assess the level of awareness of VAWC Desk officers, both in the Philippine National Police (PNP) and at the barangay level, as well as the victims of VAWC, within the Municipality of Pintuyan, Leyte. Additionally, the study evaluated the competence of VAWC Desk officers in performing their roles. Using a descriptive quantitative method, survey questionnaires were distributed to 79 respondents comprising barangay and PNP VAWC officers and VAWC victims. Results revealed a high level of awareness among all respondents regarding different forms of VAWC. VAWC Desk officers from the PNP were rated as "very effective" in executing their responsibilities, whereas barangay officers were only "moderately effective," particularly in creating gender-responsive plans and providing support services. The findings suggest that awareness enhances the identification and reporting of abuse, enabling timely intervention. The study highlights the need for improvement in barangay-level planning and capacity building to fully address the complexities of VAWC cases in the municipality.

KEYWORDS: *Violence Against Women and their Children (VAWC), Desk Officers, Level of awareness, Level of competence, Barangay Protection Order (BPO).*

INTRODUCTION

Violence against Women and Children (VAWC) remains a critical issue both globally and locally, demanding constant attention from governments and communities. In the Philippines, the passage of Republic Act No. 9262, the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004, underscores the importance of addressing violence through local mechanisms, including the establishment of VAWC desks in every barangay. These desks, managed by trained VAWC Desk Officers, are pivotal in providing immediate support and protection to victims.

In the Municipality of Pintuyan, Southern Leyte, VAWC Desk Officers are responsible for handling cases of abuse, yet many face challenges related to training, awareness, and competence. Despite existing legal frameworks and policies, the implementation of VAWC-related services at the barangay level has shown gaps, with officers often lacking the necessary skills to fully manage cases at the local level. This gap often results in cases being forwarded to higher authorities, where they could have been addressed locally, leading to delays in justice and support for victims.

This study aims to evaluate the current level of awareness and competence among VAWC Desk Officers in Pintuyan, identifying strengths and areas in need of improvement. Through this assessment, the research will provide valuable insights into how local government units can enhance their response to VAWC cases, ensuring that frontliners are equipped to offer effective, timely, and compassionate interventions. The ultimate goal is to support the development of targeted training programs that will improve the handling of VAWC cases and strengthen local protection mechanisms, contributing to the overall well-being and safety of the community.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Domestic violence and its impact on women and children remains a complex issue worldwide. A study by Guedes et al. (2018) highlighted six intersections between violence against children (VAC) and violence against women (VAW), including shared risk factors, societal norms, and intergenerational consequences. The research emphasized the need for integrated early intervention, particularly during adolescence, to address both VAC and VAW effectively.

Anderson et al. (2020) underscored the severe health and social consequences of violence, noting that inadequate responses could hinder national development. Similarly, Roberts (2020) explored the barriers that prevent women from leaving abusive relationships, including

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fear of retribution, economic dependence, and social stigma.
In terms of prevention, public awareness campaigns, gender-equitable education, and legislative reforms have been identified as critical strategies to combat VAW (UN, 2020). The United Nations also recommended engaging with community-based justice systems and increasing support for organizations working at the grassroots level to address VAW (Cox, 2021).

Despite these efforts, services for survivors of VAC and VAW remain insufficient in many regions. A report by UNICEF (2021) found that shelters and support systems were inadequate, with most facilities over capacity and under-resourced. This lack of institutional support further complicates the ability of women and children to escape abusive situations.

In the Philippines, domestic violence remains a pressing issue, with local governments attempting to address it through legislation and support services. As noted by Balahadia et al. (2022), emotional abuse is the most common form of VAW in Laguna, while physical abuse often involves former husbands. The creation of barangay-level VAW desks, as mandated by RA 9262, is one way the government has sought to provide immediate access to justice and support for survivors.

However, there are still significant challenges in the enforcement of laws and the provision of services. Garcia (2020) pointed out that the lack of reporting due to a "culture of silence" among women, as well as frustrations with the justice system, has hindered efforts to eliminate VAW. Nonetheless, local legislative bodies have made progress, such as the introduction of barangay protection orders, which allow victims to remain in their homes while the abuser is removed.

Despite these advancements, the implementation of VAW services at the barangay level has been inconsistent. Many VAW desks are under-resourced, and there is limited guidance on addressing intersections between VAW and VAC. Caban (2022) stressed the need for comprehensive training on RA 9262 to ensure that barangay officials are equipped to handle cases of abuse effectively.

While significant strides have been made in both foreign and local contexts, gaps remain in addressing the intersection of VAC and VAW, particularly in resource-limited settings. There is a need for more integrated responses at the barangay level, focusing on building the capacity of local officers to provide timely and effective interventions. Additionally, further research is required to explore the long-term effects of VAW on children and families, and how community-based approaches can be strengthened to provide more comprehensive support for survivors.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework/Paradigm of the Study
This study is grounded in the Crisis Intervention Theory, developed by Lindeimann and Caplan. The theory serves as a model guiding professionals in responding to individuals experiencing physical, emotional, or psychological distress or crises. In the context of Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC), Crisis Intervention Theory emphasizes the provision of immediate and short-term support to individuals in crisis. According to Roberts (2000), this theory is particularly relevant when addressing situations of violence, where urgency and potential danger necessitate prompt intervention by VAWC Desk Officers.

The theory highlights the importance of gathering relevant information about the crisis, such as the nature and extent of the violence, any imminent threats, and the immediate needs of the survivors. This information is essential for guiding decision-making and tailoring the intervention (Baldwin, 1979). Ensuring the safety of victims and any children involved is a primary concern in crisis intervention. Officers must assess the level of danger and take immediate steps to remove victims from harm when necessary, often working in collaboration with law enforcement or other agencies.

Crisis Intervention Theory underscores the need for collaboration with other agencies and professionals involved in the case, such as legal advocates, healthcare providers, and social services, to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated response. By following this structured and time-sensitive approach, VAWC Desk Officers can provide crucial support, facilitate the safety of survivors, and connect them with essential resources, enabling their recovery and healing.

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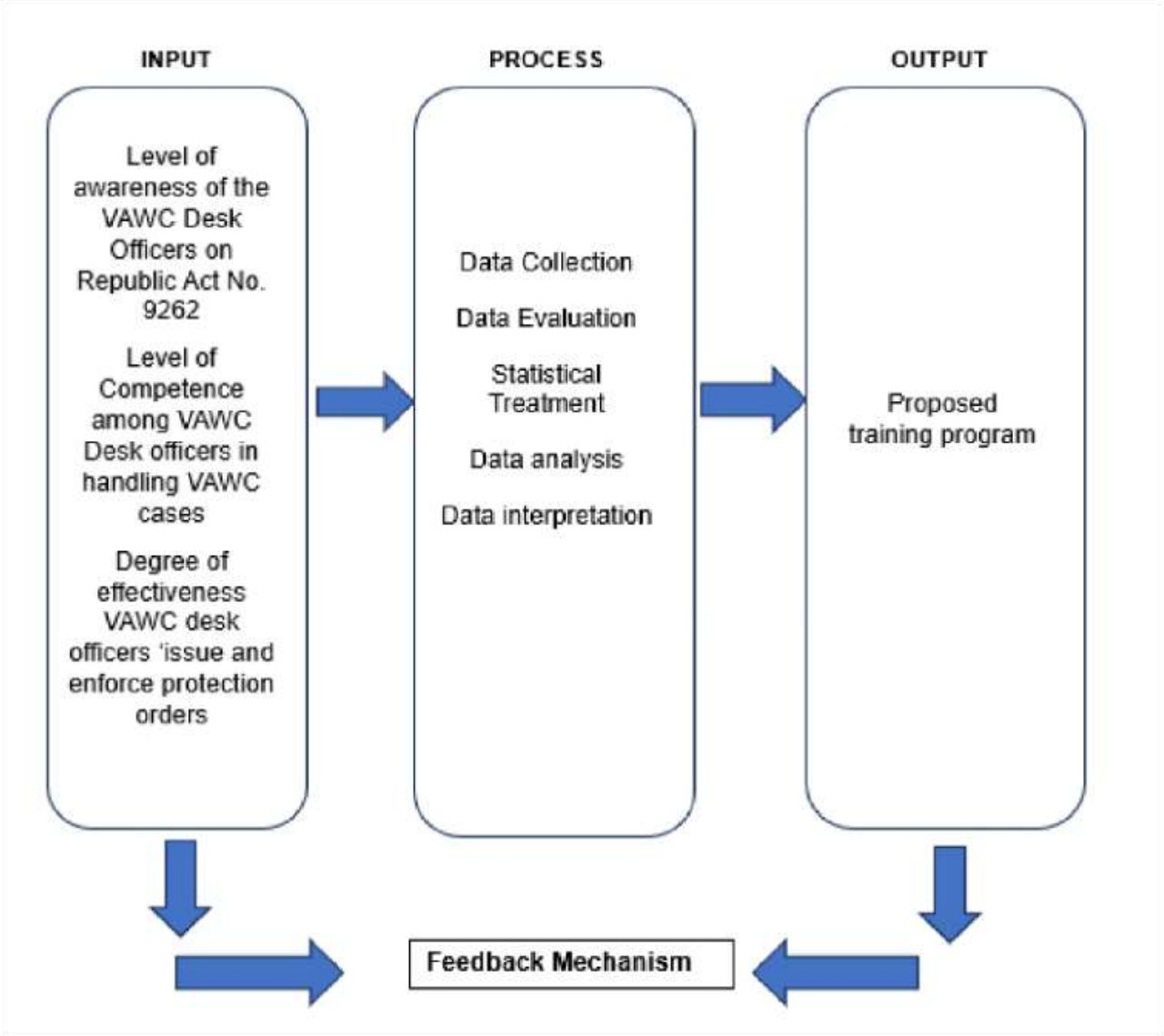


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Significance of the Study

This research aims to assess and improve the awareness and competency of VAWC Desk Officers in the Municipality of Pintuyan, Leyte, with the ultimate goal of designing an effective training program. The study is significant for several stakeholders:

VAWC Desk Officers: By identifying strengths and areas for development, the study will facilitate the design of targeted training programs that enhance their skills in handling VAWC cases. This will increase their effectiveness in crisis situations and improve their service delivery.

Victims of Violence: Through the development of a more skilled and competent desk officer corps, victims of VAWC will benefit from better support, protection, and legal assistance. This could lead to more effective interventions, ensuring that victims are empowered and receive the necessary care for recovery.

Local Government Units (LGUs) and Policymakers: The study provides valuable insights for LGUs in Pintuyan and policymakers in allocating resources for training and capacity-building programs. Policymakers can use the findings to develop regulations that strengthen the recruitment and professional development of officers handling VAWC cases.

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Law Enforcement Agencies: Agencies like the Philippine National Police can use the results to create standardized training programs for VAWC officers, ensuring consistency across municipalities and improving overall service delivery to victims.

Community and Advocacy Groups: Organizations advocating for the protection of women and children can leverage the study to work more effectively with authorities in providing resources and support for training VAWC Desk Officers.

Academia: Educational institutions can use the study as a reference for teaching in fields like criminology, social work, and public administration. It can also serve as a basis for developing curricula related to human rights, law enforcement, and public service.

Future Researchers: This study will provide a foundation for further research into the effectiveness of training programs for VAWC Desk Officers and can serve as a baseline for assessing the impact of officers' competencies on community safety.

Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to assess the awareness, competence, and effectiveness of Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) Desk Officers in the Municipality of Pintuyan. The specific objectives are as follows:

- To determine the level of awareness of the VAWC Desk Officers regarding the provisions of Republic Act No. 9262 in terms of sexual violence, psychological violence, physical violence, and economic abuse.
- To investigate whether there are significant differences in the levels of awareness among three groups of respondents regarding the aforementioned variables.
- To evaluate the level of competence among VAWC Desk Officers in handling VAWC cases, focusing on protocols and procedures, the process of interview, evidence collection, writing investigation reports, and the referral system.
- To compare the levels of competence among the three groups of respondents concerning the aforementioned variables.
- To assess the degree of effectiveness of the VAWC Desk Officers in the performance of their mandates.
- To analyze whether there are significant differences in effectiveness among the three groups of respondents regarding the aforementioned variables.
- To propose training programs based on the study's findings to enhance the awareness and competence of VAWC Desk Officers.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research utilized quantitative research design. Studies utilizing a specified sample of the population of interest to gather numerical data are referred to as "quantitative research designs." In this study, closed-ended questions were used, in which each potential response has a predetermined numerical value. Once data has been gathered, it can be examined to reveal
helpful information (Singh, 2022).

The quantitative method, according to Barbie (2010), also emphasizes precise measurements, statistical, mathematical, or numerical analysis of data obtained through polls, surveys, and other methods of data collection, as well as the manipulation of historical data through computational techniques.

A survey questionnaire served as the primary source of data. Respondents basically reviewed their responses, and the numerical results were examined and analyzed.

Research Method

This research study employed a descriptive research method to obtain a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Through the use of surveys as supported by interviews, a holistic view of the subject was obtained. This approach enables the researcher to gather data from a diverse and representative sample, allowing for a robust and accurate portrayal of the research area. By leveraging the descriptive research method, the study shed light on the intricacies and nuances of the subject matter, facilitating informed decision-making, insightful analysis, and the potential for further exploration and investigation in the field.A non-probability sampling technique called convenience sampling involves selecting samples from the population due to accessibility of the respondents. Convenience sampling, according to Hassan (2019), is a kind of non-probability sampling that entails choosing study participants from people who are easily accessible and willing to participate. This kind of sampling is frequently utilized in field studies or when conducting research on groups that are difficult to reach. When there is a shortage of time or resources, convenience sampling may be helpful.

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Population of the Study

There were three (3) groups of respondents. The first group comprises the Barangay VAWC desk officers (23), the second group comprises the VAWC Desk Officers in the Police station (2) and the third group includes the (54) complainants who filed cases from January 2021 to December 2022, all from the Municipality of Pintuyan, Leyte. The respondents were selected through a purposive sampling for group 1 and 3 respondents and convenient sampling for the second group of respondents.

Data Gathering Tools

In gathering data, the researcher utilized survey questionnaires as the primary data collection tool, which were organized into five sections. The first section collected demographic information about the respondents, including their sex, educational attainment, age, and years of service as VAW Desk Officers. The second section assessed the respondents' level of awareness regarding the provisions of Republic Act No. 9262 (the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004), focusing on forms of violence such as sexual, psychological, physical, and economic abuse. The third section evaluated the competence of VAWC Desk Officers in handling VAWC cases, specifically in areas like protocols and procedures, interviewing processes, evidence collection, report writing, and the referral system. The final section examined the effectiveness of the VAWC Desk Officers, particularly regarding the issuance and enforcement of protection orders. Indicators for the survey were derived from the provisions of Republic Act No. 9262 and the Barangay VAW Desk Handbook. Before data collection, the instrument underwent validation and a dry run. This involved consulting at least two experts with knowledge of RA 9262, such as Municipal/City Welfare Officers or VAW Officers from the PNP, to ensure reliability. Additionally, a pre-test survey was conducted with selected individuals not included in the main respondent group to further validate the instrument.

Data Gathering Procedures

In the gathering of data, several procedures were undertaken to ensure the study's validity and reliability. First, the researcher prepared the survey questionnaires based on the study's objectives, which were then validated through concurrent and dry-run validation with selected individuals. Following this, a letter of permission was drafted and submitted to the concerned authorities to authorize the distribution of the survey instruments. The researcher subsequently distributed the questionnaires to the three groups of respondents. After collection, the researcher sorted the completed questionnaires for analysis. To guide the statistical treatment of the data, the researcher consulted with the adviser, statistician, and research professor regarding the appropriate direction based on the study's sub-problems and hypotheses. Finally, the data obtained from the survey instruments were tabulated, analyzed, and statistically treated to derive meaningful results.

Treatment of Data

The data obtained from the survey were analyzed using various statistical treatments. For Sub Problem 1, the Average Weighted Mean (AWM) was employed to assess the respondents' level of awareness of the provisions of RA 9262 regarding sexual, psychological, physical, and economic violence, utilizing a four-point Likert scale. The formula for calculating the weighted mean is $WM = \sum fx/N$, where WM represents the weighted mean, $\sum$ is the summation sign, f is the frequency of responses, x is the weight of each scale value, and N is the total number of respondents. Descriptive ratings were classified as Highly Aware, Aware, Moderately Aware, and Not Aware, with corresponding point values. For Sub Problems 2 and 4, One Way Analysis of Variance was utilized to determine significant differences among the variables. For Sub Problem 3, the AWM was again used to measure the respondents' competency in areas such as protocols, interviews, evidence collection, report writing, and referral systems, employing a similar four-point Likert scale. Finally, for Sub Problem 5, the AWM was also applied to evaluate the effectiveness of respondents in issuing and enforcing protection orders, using a descriptive rating scale ranging from Very Effective to Not Effective.

Ethical Considerations

Before distributing the survey questionnaire, the researcher explained the nature of the study to the respondents. Moreover, as part of the ethical consideration, the researcher sought permission from concerned authorities. The participation of the respondents is on a voluntary basis; thus, the researcher ensured that the subjects have their full consent through the signed informed consent and informed them before the start of data gathering that they have the right to refuse and withdraw their participation in the study. Most importantly, the anonymity of the respondents was insured too. Furthermore, the researcher ensured that all information provided by them is treated with utmost confidentiality.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the study in relation to the objectives, specifically focusing on the level of awareness of the VAWC Desk Officers regarding the provisions of Republic Act No. 9262 (the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004). The discussion is organized according to the types of violence addressed by the Act: Sexual Violence, Psychological Violence, Physical

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Violence, and Economic Abuse. Each subsection begins with a presentation of relevant data, followed by a discussion of significant findings, comparisons with previous studies, and implications for practice.

Table 1: Level of Awareness of the Respondents in the Provisions of R.A. 9262 in Terms of Sexual Violence

Sexual Violence	PNP-VAWC	VI	Desk Officers	VI	Victims of VAWC	VI	Over all	VI
1.Treating a woman or her child as a sex object.	3.5	HA	3.74	HA	3.39	HA	3.54	HA
2.Forcing a woman or her child to watch obscene publications and indecent shows or forcing the woman or her child to do the same.	4	HA	3.57	HA	3.19	A	3.58	HA
3.Acts of lasciviousness	3.5	HA	3.61	HA	3.44	HA	3.51	HA
4.Making demeaning and sexually suggestive remarks	3	A	3.74	HA	3.85	HA	3.53	HA
5.Physically attacking the sexual parts of the victim's body	3	A	3.87	HA	3.67	HA	3.51	HA
Total	**3.4**	**HA**	**3.70**	**HA**	**3.51**	**HA**	**3.53**	**HA**

As presented in Table 1, the PNP VAWC Officers, Barangay Desk Officers, and victims of VAWC demonstrate a "high level of awareness" regarding the provisions of RA 9262 related to sexual violence, indicated by weighted means of 3.4, 3.70, and 3.51, respectively. This suggests that respondents possess substantial knowledge about various forms of sexual violence.

The findings indicate that VAWC Desk Officers are well-equipped to identify and manage cases of sexual violence, likely due to ongoing training and awareness programs tailored for these officers. Furthermore, victims' high awareness levels signify that public awareness campaigns have effectively educated the community about their rights under the law.

This outcome aligns with Caban (2022), who noted that comprehensive knowledge of RA 9262 is essential for safeguarding women and children. The research echoes the UN's recommendations on implementing public information work and fostering a zero-tolerance policy for violence. Conversely, findings by Legarda (2021) highlight that while awareness is increasing, continued efforts in government funding and inter-agency coordination are critical for sustainable change.

Table 2: Level of Awareness of the Respondents in the Provisions of R.A. 9262 in Terms of Psychological Violence

Psychological Violence	PNP-VAWC	VI	Desk Officers	VI	Victims of VAWC	VI	Overall	VI
1.The offended party is a woman and/or her child or children;	4	HA	3.65	HA	3.67	HA	3.77	HA
2.The woman is either the wife or former wife of the offender;	4	HA	3.78	HA	3.83	HA	3.87	HA
3.The offender causes on the woman and/or child mental or emotional anguish;	3.5	HA	3.78	HA	3.93	HA	3.73	HA

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4. The anguish is caused through acts of public ridicule or humiliation, repeated verbal	3	A	3.78	HA	3.72	HA	3.5	HA
4.Stalking or following the woman or her child in public or private places;	3.5	HA	3.65	HA	3.74	HA	3.63	HA
5.Peering in the window or lingering outside the residence of the woman or her child;	3	A	3.70	HA	3.63	HA	3.44	HA
6.Entering or remaining in the dwelling or on the property of the woman or her child against her/his will;	4	HA	3.83	HA	3.81	HA	3.88	HA
7.Destroying the property and personal belongings or inflicting harm to animals or pets of the woman or her child	4	HA	3.74	HA	3.59	HA	3.77	HA
Total	**3.63**	**HA**	**3.74**	**HA**	**3.74**	**HA**	**3.70**	**HA**

Table 2 reveals that the respondents maintain a "high level of awareness" regarding psychological violence, as evidenced by a total mean of 3.70. This awareness underscores their understanding of more subtle forms of abuse that may not be as easily identifiable as physical violence.

The effectiveness of educational programs in Pintuyan has fostered this awareness, suggesting that VAWC Desk Officers can accurately report and document incidents of psychological violence. High awareness among these officers is crucial for providing adequate support to victims, as noted by Cox (2011), who emphasizes the need for better documentation of psychological abuse.

Table 3: Level of Awareness of the Respondents in the Provisions of R.A. 9262 in Terms of Physical Violence

Physical Violence	PNP-VAWC	VI	Desk Officers	VI	Victims of VAWC	VI	Over all	VI
1.Causing physical harm to the woman or her child	4	HA	3.83	HA	3.48	HA	3.77	HA
2.Threatening to cause the woman or her child physical harm;	3	A	3.87	HA	3.78	HA	3.55	HA
3.Attempting to cause the woman or her child physical harm;	3.5	HA	3.83	HA	3.74	HA	3.69	HA
4.Placing the woman or her child in fear of imminent physical harm;	3.5	HA	3.78	HA	3.69	HA	3.65	HA
5.Attempting to restrict or restrict the woman's or her child's freedom of movement or conduct by force or threat of force, physical or other harm or threat of physical or other harm, or intimidation directed against the woman or child.	4	HA	3.65	HA	3.74	HA	3.79	HA
Total	**3.6**	**HA**	**3.79**	**HA**	**3.69**	**HA**	**3.69**	**HA**

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The findings in Table 3 indicate that all respondent groups are "highly aware" of the various forms of physical violence, with a total mean of 3.69. This suggests that awareness campaigns regarding physical violence have been effective in the Municipality of Pintuyan. A heightened awareness among VAWC Desk Officers ensures they can accurately identify and document incidents of physical violence, which is critical for legal proceedings. This finding aligns with Asia (2013), who highlights the challenges faced in prosecuting crimes against women due to procedural barriers.

The analysis of the level of awareness regarding economic abuse among the respondents reveals that both the PNP VAWC Desk officers and the Barangay VAWC Desk officers have an awareness level rated as "aware," with a mean score of 3.2. Conversely, the victims of VAWC demonstrate a "highly aware" status, with a mean score of 3.68. This indicates a thorough understanding among the respondents of the various forms of economic abuse, which allows them to recognize and address such behaviors effectively. The high awareness level among victims suggests they are equipped to advocate for themselves, seek assistance, and protect their financial interests.

The results of the ANOVA analysis to determine whether there are significant differences in awareness levels among the three groups concerning sexual violence. The analysis yields a between-groups sum of squares of 0.24 and a mean of squares of 0.12, with a computed F value of 1.41. Since this F value is less than the F critical value of 3.88, the study accepts the null hypothesis, concluding that there is no significant difference in the awareness levels regarding sexual violence among the PNP VAWC officers, Barangay VAWC Desk officers, and victims of VAWC.

The results of the study indicate that there are no significant differences in the levels of awareness regarding sexual, psychological, and physical violence among the three groups of respondents (PNP VAWC officers, Barangay VAWC Desk officers, and victims of VAWC). In the case of sexual violence, the ANOVA analysis yielded an F value of 1.41, which is less than the critical value of 3.88, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. This suggests that all groups have equal access to information on sexual violence. Similarly, for psychological violence, the analysis resulted in an F value of 0.49, also less than the critical value, confirming no significant differences in awareness levels among the groups. For physical violence, the F value was 0.70, which again indicated no significant differences.

Conversely, the results for emotional abuse showed a significant difference among the groups, with an F value of 7.60, exceeding the critical value of 3.88. This indicates varying levels of awareness about emotional abuse, which may be attributed to the nuanced nature of its behaviors, making it more challenging to recognize compared to other forms of violence. Overall, while respondents demonstrated a similar understanding of various forms of violence, they differed significantly in their awareness of emotional abuse.

The findings reveal that all groups of respondents—PNP VAWC officers, Barangay VAWC Desk officers, and victims of VAWC—exhibit a high level of awareness regarding various forms of violence, with an overall mean of 3.53 for sexual violence, 3.70 for psychological violence, and 3.69 for physical violence. Furthermore, the respondents demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of abuse that extends beyond physical and psychological harm, as indicated by an overall weighted mean of 3.36. Additionally, the VAWC Desk officers show a strong competence in handling VAWC incidents, with an overall mean of 3.70, particularly in following protocols and procedures.

The PNP VAWC Desk officers and Barangay VAWC Desk officers were both rated as "highly competent" in interviewing victims, with means of 3.75 and 3.65, respectively, although the Barangay officers scored slightly lower in employing a trauma-informed approach. All three groups rated the competence of the VAWC Desk officers in collecting evidence as "highly competent," with weighted means ranging from 3.4 to 3.8. The PNP officers also excelled in writing investigative reports, receiving a mean of 3.83, while Barangay officers were considered "competent" with a mean of 3.1. Regarding referral procedures, PNP officers scored “highly competent,” while Barangay officers received a mean of 3.2, reflecting the need for improvement.

In terms of effectiveness, PNP VAWC Desk officers were rated as "very effective" in fulfilling their mandates with a mean of 3.91, whereas Barangay officers were considered "moderately effective," particularly in formulating gender-responsive plans, as evidenced by a mean of 2.5. The analysis of significant differences revealed no notable disparities in awareness levels among the three groups concerning sexual, psychological, physical, and economic abuse, except for emotional and economic abuse. Similarly, there were no significant differences in competence levels across various aspects of handling VAWC cases, with the exceptions of writing investigative reports and referral systems. However, a significant difference was observed in the effectiveness of the Desk officers’ performance functions among the groups.

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CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the high level of awareness among VAWC Desk officers enables them to effectively identify various forms of violence, including physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, and economic abuse, facilitating prompt intervention and support for victims. Victims who recognize what constitutes VAWC are more likely to acknowledge their experiences as abusive and report these incidents, leading to better documentation and response efforts. This heightened awareness ultimately contributes to a more effective and comprehensive approach to VAWC, enhancing protection and support for victims and reducing violence within the community.

Additionally, the competence of VAWC Desk officers in managing various aspects of VAWC cases enhances professionalism and efficiency, improving victim support, strengthening evidence collection, and ensuring effective collaboration with other agencies. This increased competence fosters victim trust and empowerment, contributes to higher conviction rates and better legal outcomes, and positively influences policy and program development as well as community awareness and preventive measures. Furthermore, the VAWC Desk officers demonstrate high effectiveness in fulfilling their mandates, significantly contributing to the prevention, combatting, and prosecution of VAWC incidents within the Municipality. However, there is a noted gap in the formulation of gender-responsive plans and support services among Barangay VAWC Desk officers, which could hinder overall efforts in combating this social issue.

In light of these findings, several recommendations are proposed:

1. Training and seminars for both Barangay and PNP VAWC Desk officers should emphasize specialized training in trauma-informed care, mental health support, and crisis intervention to enhance the quality of victim support.
2. Continuous training and updates on the latest methods and technologies in evidence collection are essential, particularly for Barangay VAWC Desk officers, to maintain their skills.
3. Strengthening collaboration among VAWC Desk officers, law enforcement, healthcare providers, and social services is vital for an integrated approach to victim support.
4. Barangay VAWC Desk officers should receive assistance and training in writing investigative reports to enhance their effectiveness as first responders.
5. PNP VAWC Desk officers and relevant agencies should support Barangay officers in formulating gender-responsive plans to address VAWC in their communities.
6. A parallel study should be conducted to explore other factors affecting the efficiency and effectiveness of VAWC Desk officers, such as resource availability, government support, and officer training and professionalism.

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