

# The Implementation of Violence Against Women and their Children (VAWC) Program in Pili, Camarines Sur: An Assessment

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## ABSTRACT

Violence Against Women and their Children (VAWC) remains a major public concern worldwide. In the Philippines, Republic Act No. 9262 provides the legal framework for addressing VAWC, yet effective protection depends on local implementation. This study assessed the level of implementation of the VAWC program in Pili for C.Y. 2025–2026 to inform policy development. Using a descriptive-correlational design, data were gathered from 45 identified female survivors of intimate partner violence through a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire measuring the frequency of six forms of abuse and the implementation of corresponding police programs. Weighted mean, frequency count, Spearman's rho, and t-test were used for analysis at  $\alpha = 0.05$ . Findings showed that physical

(3.99), emotional (3.57), and financial/economic abuse (3.55) occurred often, while psychological (2.52), sexual (2.75), and social abuse (2.43) were reported less frequently. Program implementation was strongest for sexual abuse protection (4.15) and psychological support (4.09), but weakest for physical abuse prevention (2.51) and financial/economic abuse mitigation (2.38). Correlation analysis revealed only one significant relationship: a strong negative correlation between sexual abuse frequency and sexual abuse protection measures ( $\rho = -0.738$ ,  $p = 0.046$ ), indicating that stronger interventions were associated with lower abuse incidence. The findings highlight a mismatch between the most prevalent forms of abuse and the least implemented interventions, underscoring the need for strengthened frontline capacity. Accordingly, the proposed policy agenda, *Empowering the Frontliners*, emphasizes enhanced training, funding, and coordinated protocols for the Philippine National Police and Barangay VAWC desks to improve prevention and response.

**Keywords:** *frequency of violence, women, children, violence against women and children, program implementation, PNP*

## INTRODUCTION

The global pursuit of ensuring safety and dignity for all women and children is a central aspect of human rights and sustainable development. The realization of this objective requires establishing societies grounded in principles of respect, equality, and justice through strengthened legal frameworks, equitable education, and accountability. It is as much an ethical necessity as it is a fundamental building block for global betterment.

According to the United Nations (2024), the violence against women and children remains a widespread and persistent human rights issue around the globe, with significant impacts on their health,

well-being, and overall personal development. Statistics showed that nearly one in three women, or 30% of 736 million, have experienced physical or sexual violence, often at the hands of their intimate partner. Furthermore, violence against women is a barrier to achieving equality, development, and peace. The National Commission on Women conducted a National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) in 2022, which revealed that nearly one in five women has experienced emotional, physical, or sexual violence from their intimate partners. Meanwhile, in 2023, the Philippine National Police (PNP) reported 8,055 cases of violence against women and children under Republic Act No. 9262, as cited by the National Commission on Women (2024).

While progress has been made, the path to full equality remains long. According to the World Economic Forum's 2024 Global Gender Gap Report, as cited by Pal et al. (2024), achieving global gender parity will take 134 years, equivalent to five (5) generations beyond the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal target. Yet hope persists. Every Filipino has the power to help end Violence Against Women and their Children (VAWC), and the time to act is now. As Asia's most gender-equal nation and 25th globally in the Gender Gap Index, the Philippines is uniquely positioned to turn the goal of a VAWC-free country into a lived reality.

In view of the foregoing scenario, the Philippine commitment to gender equality is embedded in a robust and proactive legal architecture that predates and often anticipates later international campaigns. This foundational approach began with the landmark 1987 Constitution, which explicitly enshrined in Article II, Section 14, "the State recognizes the role of women in nation-building, and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men," as a state policy, providing the supreme legal bedrock for all subsequent reforms. Complementing this constitutional mandate, the introduction of Article 152 of the Philippine Family Code systematically dismantled numerous discriminatory provisions, particularly those about marital authority and property relations, thereby initiating a profound restructuring of the private sphere under the law.

The country's legislative momentum continued independently of global advocacy timelines. Well before its formal participation in the international 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence in 2002, the Philippines had already enacted pioneering statutes addressing specific forms of violence. The Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995 (Republic Act No. 7877) was a groundbreaking law that defined and penalized sexual harassment in employment, education, and training environments, establishing critical mechanisms for redress. This was swiftly followed by the Anti-Rape Law of 1997 (Republic Act No. 8353), which significantly reclassified rape as a crime against persons, broadened its definition, and eliminated archaic provisions that had previously hindered prosecution.

This period of intense legislative activity culminated in the early 2000s with two cornerstone laws. The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 (Republic Act No. 9208) created a comprehensive legal framework to combat human trafficking, aligning domestic policy with emerging international protocols. Most significantly, the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004 (Republic Act No. 9262) provided an expansive, victim-centered definition of violence—encompassing physical, sexual, psychological, and economic abuse—and instituted critical protection orders and support services. Notably, these transformative laws were already in force before the domestic extension of the international campaign to 18 Days via Presidential Proclamation No. 1172 in 2006, underscoring a legislative agenda driven by internal imperatives rather than external symbolism.

The Philippine National Police (PNP) implements a comprehensive suite of specialized programs designed to prevent and address violence against women and children. Central to these efforts is the network of Women and Children Protection Desks (WCPDs), dedicated units established in every police station nationwide, staffed by trained female officers who provide a victim-centered response, psychosocial support, and forensic interview services in a private and non-threatening environment. Complementing this institutional mechanism is the annual 18-Day Campaign to End Violence Against Women. This nationwide advocacy initiative mobilizes police-community partnerships through symposia, information drives, and

public demonstrations to raise awareness and encourage reporting. At the community level, the PNP operationalizes programs such as the Barangay Women and Children Protection Desk Action Partners (B-WAP), which capacitates barangay officials and community volunteers to serve as first responders and referral points, effectively extending the reach of police services into barangay-level governance. Additionally, specialized projects like B.A.M.B.O.O. (Babae Ako na may Malasakit at Babaeng Organisado Anumang Oras) focus on empowering women through community organizing, gender-sensitivity training, and the establishment of local support networks that facilitate timely intervention. To ensure operational readiness, the PNP conducts continuous capacity-building initiatives through the Women and Children Protection Center (WCPC), which delivers specialized training on case handling, victim interviewing techniques, and the proper execution of protection orders for frontline officers. These programs collectively form an integrated, multi-level approach that prioritizes victim safety, community engagement, and specialized police response.

This progression from constitutional principle to specific, enforceable statutes illustrates a sophisticated understanding of gender-based violence as a multifaceted issue requiring a multi-pronged legal response. The nation's early and substantive legislative record provides a firm juridical foundation for its contemporary claims to regional leadership in gender equality, highlighting a commitment that is codified, progressive, and predicated on actionable law rather than aspirational rhetoric alone.

Despite its progressive reputation, Pili, Camarines Sur, faces persistent VAWC driven by patriarchal norms, economic dependency, and generational abuse. Most cases go unreported due to fear of retaliation, stigma, economic reliance on abusers, and distrust in authorities. This gap between actual harm and official data undermines effective intervention.

From a law enforcement perspective, the present study addresses an operational imperative by seeking to bridge the critical gap between the limited incidents officially reported to the police and the unreported reality of violence within the community. It provides essential localized intelligence on causative factors, enabling a shift from a reactive to a proactive and prevention-focused policing strategy.

At this vantage point, the present study aims to determine the implementation of the Violence Against Women and Their Children (VAWC) program of the Pili Municipal Police Station, Pili, Camarines Sur, C/Y 2025-2026. The findings are crucial for developing targeted interventions, improving investigative and support protocols, and ultimately fostering a more effective and trustworthy community response to protect vulnerable sectors.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theories from which this study was anchored are the following: Ecological Systems Theory by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979), refined by Heise (1998 & 2000), Routine Activities Theory by Cohen and Felson (1979), adapted by Lauritsen & Sampson (2000), and Situational Theory by Ronald Clarke (1995). Figure 1 shows the theoretical paradigm of the study.

Ecological Systems Theory was originally developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979) to explain human development as a product of nested environmental systems that interact with the individual over time. Bronfenbrenner conceptualized these systems as a series of concentric structures: the microsystem, representing the immediate relationships and settings in which an individual directly participates, such as family and school; the mesosystem, encompassing the interactions between microsystem elements; the exosystem, comprising broader social structures that indirectly influence the individual, such as community institutions and law enforcement agencies; and the macrosystem, representing the overarching cultural values, norms, and policies that permeate all other layers. The chronosystem was later added to account for changes across the life course and historical context.

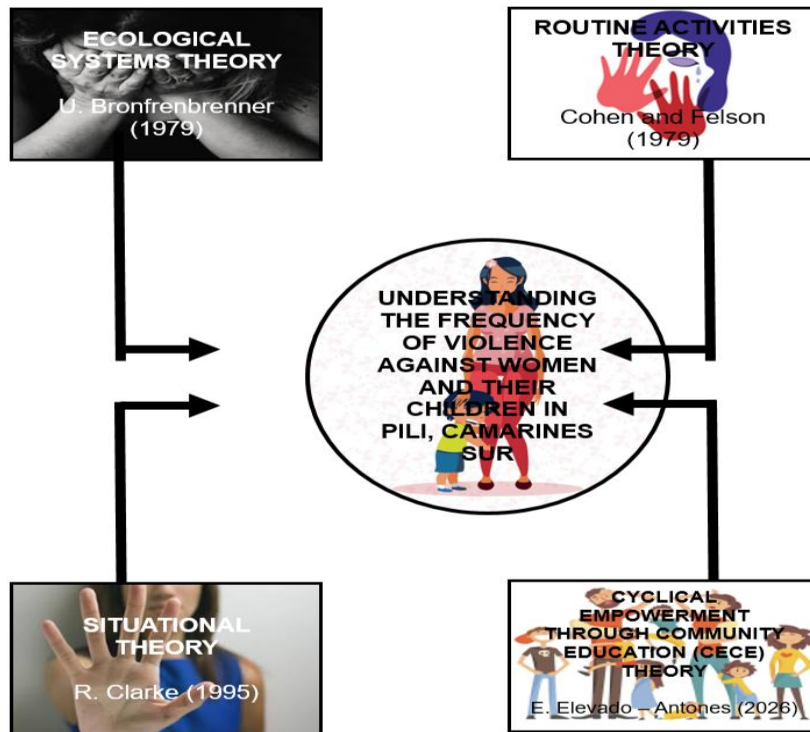


Figure 1. *Theoretical Paradigm*

This framework fundamentally shifted the understanding of human behavior from individual-centric explanations to a recognition that dynamic interactions across multiple levels of environmental influence shape development and outcomes.

The refinement of this theory for violence against women research was significantly advanced by Lori Heise (1998) and subsequent work in the early 2000s, who adapted the ecological model to conceptualize intimate partner violence as a multifaceted phenomenon emerging from the interplay of risk factors across all systemic levels. Heise's ecological framework posits that violence cannot be adequately understood by examining individual characteristics alone, such as an offender's history of substance use or a survivor's educational attainment but must be situated within the context of family dynamics, community structures, and societal gender norms.

At the individual level, factors such as witnessing parental violence during childhood or having accepting attitudes toward violence contribute to perpetration risk. At the relationship level, marital conflict, male dominance in decision making, and economic stress create conditions conducive to abuse. At the community level, factors such as neighborhood poverty, weak institutional responses from police and social services, and the absence of women's organizations influence both the frequency of violence and the likelihood of reporting. At the societal level, gender norms that condone male authority over women and the acceptability of physical discipline shape the macrosystem within which all other levels operate. This ecological framework provides a scientifically robust rationale for examining the frequency of diverse abuse typologies in Pili, Camarines Sur, as it compels researchers to consider how individual vulnerabilities, household dynamics, community institutional capacity, including the police response, and prevailing cultural norms collectively determine the prevalence of physical, emotional, economic, psychological, sexual, and social abuse.

Furthermore, it directly informs evaluation of police programs by situating the Pili Municipal Police as an exosystem institution whose interventions must be designed to address risk factors across all ecological levels to be effective, recognizing that isolated programmatic efforts without corresponding changes at the macrosystem or microsystem levels are unlikely to produce sustained reductions in violence.

Routine Activities Theory was originally formulated by Lawrence Cohen and Marcus Felson (1979) to explain crime trends in the United States, proposing that crime occurs when three elements converge in time and space: a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian. This theory represented a departure from traditional criminological perspectives that focused primarily on offender motivation, instead emphasizing how the structural organization of everyday activities creates opportunities for criminal events. Cohen and Felson argued that changes in routine activities, such as increased female labor force participation leading to empty households, altered the convergence of these three elements and explained rising crime rates independent of changes in offender populations. The theory originally focused primarily on property crime. Still, its applicability was extended to interpersonal violence through subsequent scholarly work that recognized the salience of situational opportunity structures in violent victimization as well.

Janet Lauritsen and Robert Sampson substantially advanced the adaptation of Routine Activities Theory to violence against women in the early 2000s, extending the framework to examine how routine activities shape the risk of intimate partner violence and sexual victimization. This adaptation recognized that for violence against women, the motivated offender is often a current or former intimate partner, the suitable target is the woman who may be rendered vulnerable through isolation or dependency, and the capable guardian may take various forms, including police intervention, the presence of children or other adults in the household, neighborhood surveillance, or the effective enforcement of protection orders.

Lauritsen and Sampson's work emphasized that victimization risk is not uniformly distributed but is structured by patterns of daily life, including time spent in private versus public spaces, the presence of third parties during interactions, geographic isolation, and access to resources that enable escape or help seeking. The theory, therefore, provides a compelling scientific rationale for examining the frequency of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse in Pili, Camarines Sur, as it directs attention to the situational and contextual factors that create opportunities for violence. For instance, higher frequencies of abuse may be associated with households in geographically isolated barangays where the absence of neighbors or passing police patrols eliminates capable guardians, or with evening and nighttime hours when community surveillance diminishes. Regarding the extent of implementation of police programs, this theory offers a framework for evaluating whether the Pili Municipal Police effectively functions as a capable guardian through proactive strategies such as patrol presence in high-risk areas, rapid response to domestic disturbance calls, consistent follow-up on protection orders, and the establishment of visible police presence in community settings.

The theory suggests that program effectiveness should be measured not only by arrest rates or case processing metrics, but also by the extent to which police interventions alter the opportunity structure for offenders, increasing the perceived risk of detection and apprehension and thereby deterring potential acts of violence.

Situational Theory, developed primarily by Ronald Clarke (1995), emerged from the broader rational choice and routine activities traditions. Clarke's framework posits that offenders make context-specific decisions based on their assessments of opportunities, risks, and rewards. Therefore, crime can be prevented by manipulating the situational environment through five categories of intervention: increasing the effort required to commit the offense, increasing the risks of detection, reducing the anticipated rewards, reducing provocations that may precipitate violence, and removing excuses that offenders use to justify their behavior.

This theoretical approach diverges from perspectives that emphasize offender pathology or broad social causes, instead focusing on the specific circumstances that precede and enable violent events. Clarke

and his colleagues demonstrated through empirical studies that situational factors such as the physical layout of spaces, the presence of surveillance, the availability of weapons or alcohol, and the immediacy of potential intervention significantly influence whether violence occurs in a given instance.

A more recent and integrative development within the situational tradition is Situational Action Theory, advanced by Per Olof Wikström (2006), which synthesizes insights from situational criminology with attention to individual morality and self-control. Wikström proposed that crime is the outcome of a perception choice process in which individuals with varying moral propensities encounter settings with varying criminogenic characteristics. According to this formulation, individuals are more likely to commit acts of violence when they have a propensity to do so, meaning weak moral filters or low self-control, and when they are exposed to settings that provide moral cues supporting or permitting such behavior.

This interactionist perspective is particularly valuable for understanding violence against women because it explains why the same individual may not offend in all contexts but only when situational conditions align, such as when alcohol consumption impairs judgment, when the setting provides privacy that reduces risk of intervention, or when cultural norms within the immediate environment communicate tolerance for male aggression. For the study of VAWC frequency in Pili, Camarines Sur, Situational Action Theory directs researchers to examine not only the characteristics of offenders and survivors but also the specific situational contexts in which abuse occurs, including the presence of alcohol, the history of conflict between parties, the physical setting, and the immediate social environment.

Regarding the evaluation of police programs, the situational perspective provides a rigorous scientific rationale for assessing whether the Pili Municipal Police's interventions target these situational determinants. Physical Abuse Prevention Programs, for example, may be evaluated based on whether they include situational components such as alcohol bans in high-risk households, mandatory reporting protocols that increase the risk of detection, or home visitation programs that temporarily increase capable guardianship. Similarly, Sexual Abuse Protection Measures may be assessed for their effectiveness in altering the situational opportunities for offending through measures such as secure transportation for survivors, supervised visitation during custody exchanges, or the use of electronic monitoring for high-risk offenders. The theoretical strength of the situational perspective lies in its focus on the immediate and modifiable conditions that precede violence, offering clear guidance for both understanding why abuse occurs in specific instances and designing interventions that alter those conditions to prevent future harm.

The integration of the aforementioned theories establishes that the frequency of abuse in Pili, Camarines Sur, arises from layered ecological influences, situational convergences of offenders and targets, and modifiable environmental conditions. This theoretical grounding justifies the study's focus on evaluating police programs as institutional interventions capable of disrupting these causal pathways through effective implementation. Collectively, the perspectives provide a coherent rationale for systematically examining both the occurrence of violence across typologies and the extent to which municipal police responses address the multifactorial nature of the problem.

Equipped with the above-cited theories, the researcher postulates that the integrational and socially reinforced cycle of violence can be systematically disrupted through targeted multi-pronged educational campaigns that directly alter the cost-benefit structures and provide new behavioral models.

In support of these goals, the researcher considered the three (3) fronts:

**Countering Disorganization with Informational Cohesion.** By implementing widespread, culturally tailored campaigns in schools, barangay halls, and through local media, the community is unified around a new, common value: the unacceptability of violence. This transforms a disorganized environment into one with a clear, shared narrative, thereby increasing informal social control and the perceived cost to the perpetrator through communal disapproval.

**Reframing the Social Exchange.** Education equips potential victims, their families, and community bystanders with explicit knowledge of their rights, available legal protections, and support services. This publicly available information drastically increases the perceived costs for perpetrators by raising the

likelihood of exposure and sanction, while simultaneously increasing the rewards for victims to seek help by providing a clear pathway to safety and justice.

Providing Alternative Models for Social Learning. Educational programs, especially those targeting youth and children, provide positive, non-violent models for conflict resolution and healthy relationships. By observing and learning these alternative behaviors in a structured setting, individuals acquire a new repertoire of responses that directly compete with the violent models they have learned at home. This breaks the integrational transmission of violence by providing powerful, countervailing sources of learning.

Indeed, this researcher's theory is known as the Cyclical Empowerment through Community Education (CECE) Theory. This theory posits that sustained education and awareness campaigns act as a catalytic intervention. They simultaneously reorganize the community, recalibrate the perceived economics of violence for both perpetrator and victim, and supply a new curriculum for social learning, thereby creating a self-reinforcing cycle of empowerment and resilience that systematically dismantles the causative factors of violence.

### Conceptual Framework

Figure 2 shows the conceptual paradigm of the study. It is based on the system approach, which shows the interplay of the three important elements: the input, the process, and the output.

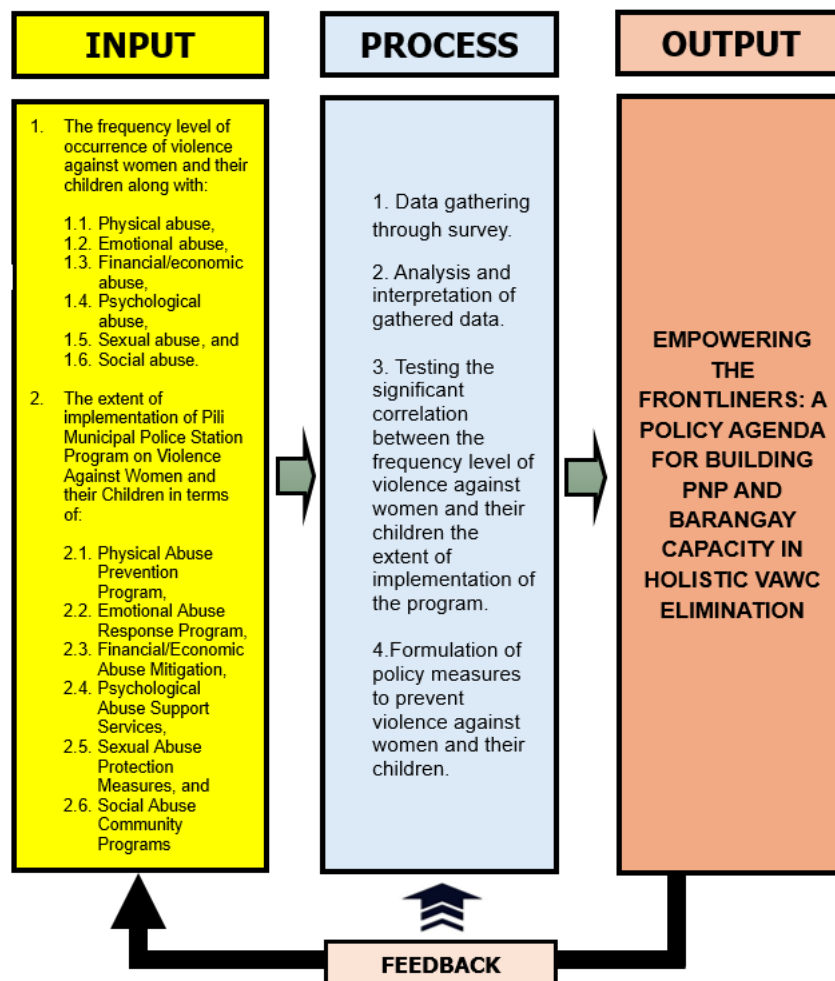


Figure 2. *Conceptual Paradigm*

**Input.** It includes the frequency level of violence against women and their children along with physical abuse, emotional abuse, financial/economic abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse, and social abuse; and the extent of implementation of Pili Municipal Police Station, Camarines Sur's program on violence against women and their children in terms of physical abuse prevention program, emotional abuse response program, financial/economic abuse mitigation, psychological abuse support services, sexual abuse protection measures, and social abuse community programs.

**Process.** It consists of data gathering through a survey; analysis and interpretation of gathered data; testing the significant correlation between the frequency level of violence against women and their children, the extent of implementation of the program; and formulation of policy measures to prevent violence against women and their children.

**Output.** This study, based on the findings, is Empowering the Frontliners: A Policy Agenda for Building PNP and Barangay Capacity in Holistic VAWC Elimination.

The *feedback loop* provides a mechanism for the continued development of the program and for keeping on track with the needed changes and adjustments to improve effectiveness and efficiency.

### Statement of the Problem

The study determined the implementation of violence against women and their children (VAWC) program in Pili, Camarines Sur, Calendar Year 2025-2026.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the frequency level of occurrence of violence against women and their children in Pili, Camarines Sur in terms of:
  - 1.1. Physical abuse
  - 1.2. Emotional abuse,
  - 1.3. Financial/economic abuse,
  - 1.4. Psychological abuse,
  - 1.5. Sexual abuse, and
  - 1.6. Social abuse?
2. What is the extent of implementation of the program implemented by the Pili Municipal Police on the violence against women and their children in terms of:
  - 2.1. Physical Abuse Prevention Program,
  - 2.2. Emotional Abuse Response Program,
  - 2.3. Financial/Economic Abuse Mitigation,
  - 2.4. Psychological Abuse Support Services,
  - 2.5. Sexual Abuse Protection Measures, and
  - 2.6. Social Abuse Community Programs?
3. Is there a significant correlation between the frequency level of violence against women and their children and the implementation of VAWC program in Pili, Camarines Sur?
4. What recommendations can be proposed to strengthen the violence against women and their children program based on the findings of the study?

### Assumptions of the Study

This study was premised on the following assumptions:

The frequency level of occurrence of violence against women and their children in Pili, Camarines Sur, has varying degrees and can be assessed across the following dimensions: physical abuse, emotional abuse, financial/economic abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse, and social abuse.

The extent of implementation of the program implemented by the Philippine National Police on the violence against women and their children varies in terms of physical abuse prevention programs, emotional abuse response programs, financial/economic abuse mitigation, psychological abuse support services, sexual abuse protection measures, and social abuse community programs.

Proposed recommendations can be formulated to strengthen the violence against women and their children program based on the findings of the study.

### **Literature Review**

The widespread prevalence of violence against women and children is consistently identified as a critical global crisis. The International Justice Mission (2025) characterizes domestic and sexual violence as among the most common yet least prosecuted offenses worldwide, a failure attributed to weak and underfunded public justice systems. This systemic deficiency creates a cyclical problem where low arrest and conviction rates discourage reporting, thereby perpetuating abuse. A key operational vulnerability occurs at the first-response stage, where first responders, such as police, are often untrained, corrupt, or indifferent (International Justice Mission, 2025). This systemic failure is compounded by significant obstacles for survivors, including trauma, fear of retaliation, and societal victim-blaming, all exacerbated by a severe lack of specialized services and shelters (International Justice Mission, 2025).

The global scale of the issue is underscored by data indicating that 35% of women worldwide have experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence, with one in four women affected globally (Concern Worldwide, 2023; International Rescue Committee, 2023). The crisis is further magnified during humanitarian crises, where the breakdown of family, community, and legal protections increases vulnerability (International Rescue Committee, 2023). Park (2021) frames this not as isolated incidents but as a systemic social problem, noting that 137 women are killed daily by intimate partners or family members, highlighting a pattern rooted in social norms rather than individual deviance.

A consensus across the literature identifies gender inequality and patriarchal structures as the primary, foundational drivers of violence against women and children. Our Watch (2024) asserts that the unequal distribution of power and resources between men and women creates the societal context for abuse, evidenced by factors such as victim-blaming, men's control over decision-making and women's independence, rigid gender roles, and male peer relationships that normalize aggression. This perspective is echoed by Safe and Equal (2024), which posits that the unequal distribution of power, resources, and choice based on gender identity is the main cause of family violence, manifesting in community attitudes that justify control.

In the Philippine context, Siena (2025) highlights that a combination of poverty, low education levels, lack of community support, and deep-seated gender inequalities drives violence against women and children (VAWC). Colonial legacies are noted to have exacerbated these issues by historically oppressing women and enforcing subservient roles, which normalized gender-based violence (Siena, 2025). This is supported by Parcon and Makani (2024), who detail how poverty leads to economic dependence, increasing vulnerability to abuse, while low education limits awareness and agency, correlating with higher rates of intimate partner violence. The Philippine Commission on Women (2022) reinforces this, stating that violence in the country is directly linked to unequal power dynamics and social norms that position men in authority, making gender-based violence a mechanism for asserting control.

Beyond the overarching factor of gender inequality, several interconnected drivers are identified. These include harmful gender stereotypes and patriarchal cultures; conflicts, crises, and displacement; poverty and economic challenges; lack of legal protection; and inadequate political representation (Concern Worldwide, 2023). The Prevention Collaborative (2022) further conceptualizes these drivers using an ecological model, noting that violence is not caused by a single factor but by a complex interplay across individual (e.g., childhood exposure to abuse), relationship (e.g., substance use), community (e.g., male peer groups), and societal (e.g., weak legal sanctions) levels, with gender inequality and patriarchal structures as the most consistent root causes.

Specific social norms are identified as mechanisms that perpetuate violence. Park (2021) delineates three interrelated norms: the pressure on men to be the primary breadwinner, which can trigger violence when this identity is threatened; the norm of male decision-making authority, which creates conflict when women have economic power; and the expectation of emotional stoicism, which funnels male frustration

into anger and violence. Similarly, a study on child protection in Lebanon by the United Nations Children's Fund (2020) found that extreme economic pressure and gendered ideas about provider roles drive child labor and child marriage, while deeply held beliefs about discipline and gender roles perpetuate violent discipline and intimate partner violence.

The literature emphasizes that while violence affects people across all demographics, its impact is not uniform. Intersecting identities such as disability, refugee status, LGBTQ+ identification, or belonging to an ethnic minority can heighten risk and render individuals susceptible to multi-faceted forms of discrimination and violence (International Rescue Committee, 2023). Safe and Equal (2024) similarly notes that the effects of family violence are compounded by systems of discrimination like racism, ableism, and homophobia, which also impact children who are harmed by witnessing abuse perpetrated by a parent.

The iceberg model, as presented by Our Watch (2024), illustrates that visible acts of violence like rape and physical assault are built upon a larger, hidden foundation of harmful norms such as disrespect, coercive control, and sexist language. This is reflected in the Philippine context, where a culture of silence, fueled by shame, frustration, and distrust in the justice system, leads to significant underreporting of violence, with victims often facing wrongful blame (Philippine Commission on Women, 2022). This lack of complete data remains a significant barrier to understanding and addressing the full scope of the problem.

The consequences of violence against women and children are severe, multi-faceted, and long-lasting. For children, violence can lead to death, injury, impaired brain development, increased risky behaviors, and a higher risk of perpetuating violence across generations (World Health Organization, 2022). For women, the impacts include physical injuries, death, psychological trauma, unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections, social stigma, and economic disempowerment, all of which hinder long-term recovery and resilience (International Rescue Committee, 2023). The World Health Organization (2022) categorizes violence against children into six main forms—maltreatment, bullying, youth violence, intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and emotional abuse—emphasizing that exposure in any setting has devastating lifelong effects on health and well-being.

In response to the complex drivers of violence, the literature advocates for multi-level, collaborative approaches. The International Justice Mission (2025) stresses the need for effective intervention that combines immediate survivor protection with long-term systemic strengthening. This multi-agency approach is mirrored in the Philippines, where the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), as the lead agency of the Inter-Agency Council on Violence Against Women and their Children (IACVAWC), implements a multi-faceted strategy (Presidential Communication Office, 2024). Key initiatives include strengthening a nationwide referral service for comprehensive support (legal, medical, psychosocial, shelter), developing a harmonized national data system with the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) and UNFPA, and creating a national service directory to improve local access to services (Presidential Communication Office, 2024). The DSWD also engages in education campaigns, promotes men as allies, implements intervention programs for perpetrators, and provides socioeconomic support through livelihood programs and immediate financial assistance to foster long-term recovery and independence (Presidential Communication Office, 2024).

A critical component of effective prevention is holding perpetrators accountable and distinguishing overarching societal influences from individual risk factors. While factors like substance abuse may intensify risk, accountability for violence rests exclusively with the perpetrator (Safe & Equal, 2024). For children, the evidence supports that violence is preventable. The INSPIRE framework, utilized by UNICEF and the World Health Organization, demonstrates that a systematic, multi-level approach is required, incorporating seven strategies: enforcing protective laws, changing harmful norms, making environments safe, supporting parents and caregivers, strengthening economic security, improving response services, and providing education and life skills (World Health Organization, 2022).

Despite the existence of known solutions, a significant gap remains. The International Rescue Committee (2023) notes that humanitarian action consistently fails to prioritize and fund gender-based

violence prevention and response, despite the potential of these interventions to strengthen communities and promote global stability. Effective prevention, therefore, requires a feminist perspective that confronts inequitable power dynamics and addresses the interconnected root causes and systemic factors that perpetuate violence against women and children (International Rescue Committee, 2023; Prevention Collaborative, 2022).

Soliven et al. (2025) found a statistically significant improvement in participants' competencies across all measured domains. Pre- and post-test analyses revealed substantial increases in knowledge, practical skills, and professional attitudes and values, with all changes being statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ). The training was highly effective in enhancing gender sensitivity, improving understanding of gender roles and biases, and developing crucial counseling and case-handling skills. Furthermore, participants reported high levels of satisfaction with the program's relevance and cost-efficiency. A key finding was the absence of major challenges during the program's implementation, suggesting that such capacity-building initiatives are both feasible and highly effective for strengthening frontline responses to VAWC at the local level.

Ullman et al. (2025) conducted a systematic review of 178 studies, which reveals a significant disparity in research emphasis among seven primary prevention strategies aimed at addressing violence against women and children. Most of the evidence (44%) is about services for survivors. A lot of other work (20%) looks at how to stop abuse of children and teens and how to change people's attitudes, beliefs, and norms about gender (12%). Nine (9) percent of the literature analyzed by the authors was about interventions that make places safer and give women and girls more power. Conversely, strategies aimed at poverty alleviation (3%) and enhancing interpersonal skills (3%) represent a negligible segment of the academic emphasis.

A significant conclusion from the authors' meta-analysis is the stagnation of evidence for two principal strategies. The review shows that little new evidence has come to light that would change the understanding of or confirm the effectiveness of programs aimed at reducing poverty and improving relationship skills. On the other hand, new studies have strengthened the evidence base for the other five strategies, especially survivor services, child abuse prevention, and norm transformation. These studies show that these strategies work in a variety of settings. This difference reveals a significant gap in generating high-quality evidence for structural and upstream interventions. It suggests that more targeted research funding is needed to build a more complete and fair evidence base for global prevention efforts.

Based on the study by Pablo (2025), Barangay Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) desk officers in the Province of Laguna, Philippines, demonstrated the capability to perform a range of functions. They were proficient in executing immediate interventions, such as coordinating with police for victim rescue and medical care, and in performing intermediate functions, including maintaining confidential records and assisting survivor reintegration. They were also capable of implementing anti-VAWC prevention functions by adapting local ordinances and seeking technical assistance. However, the author identified that these officers encountered moderately serious challenges across all functional areas. These challenges included insufficient equipment and training, non-cooperation from victims and suspects, an inability to provide necessary support and treatment, and a lack of familiarity with key legislative provisions, such as Republic Act 9262. The study found that officers' age was significantly related to their capability, while their educational attainment was significantly related to the challenges they encountered. To address these issues, the author recommends allocating an adequate budget for community programs, providing regular refresher courses for officers on case processing and survivor assistance, and ensuring sufficient equipment and facilities. Although contextualized in Laguna, the study's findings have potential implications for strengthening VAWC desk officer capabilities across the Philippines.

According to Santos and De Guzman (2025), a clinical profile of intimate partner violence (IPV) survivors revealed a patient population with a mean age of 38.77 years, predominantly from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and with varied educational attainment. The most commonly documented

forms of abuse were physical (28.3%) and psychological (26.4%). A significant comorbidity was observed, with 22.6% of survivors diagnosed with depression and 20.8% reporting suicide attempts. Critically, the vast majority (85.9%) expressed relationship dissatisfaction, and most (83.0%) had a history of prior abuse, indicating a pattern of chronic victimization. While nearly all survivors (98.1%) were aware of protective legislation and reported strong social support (95.5%), partner-level risk factors, such as substance abuse or a history of childhood abuse, were infrequently documented in the medical records.

The study by Boncales et al. (2025) presents a nuanced analysis of gender-based violence (GBV) awareness and prevalence in Barangay Tagbaobo, Samal, Davao Del Norte. The research surveyed a socio-demographically diverse sample, with strong representation from middle-aged cohorts (e.g., 35-39 at 13.0%) and a majority of married respondents (62.0%), though significant proportions identified as single (14.1%) or in live-in arrangements (14.8%), reflecting evolving partnership dynamics. A critical finding was the stark discrepancy between self-reported and officially recorded violence. Survey results indicated a "very low" self-reported level of GBV across all forms (Physical:  $M=1.17$ ; Sexual:  $M=1.13$ ; Economic:  $M=1.27$ ; Psychological:  $M=1.32$ ), suggesting a sense of safety in the community. However, this contrasted with barangay blotter records documenting three separate cases of VAWC involving physical abuse and online shaming, which were often settled informally or dropped, pointing to significant underreporting influenced by stigma, procedural barriers, and informal resolutions.

Based on the analysis by Parcon and Makani (2025), the Philippines has witnessed a steady decline in the proportion of women experiencing Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) across successive National Demographic and Health Surveys. Their research identified a significant disparity in current IPV prevalence by marital status, with married women reporting a higher prevalence (12.8%, 95% CI [11.8–13.9]) than never-married women (6.0%, 95% CI [4.6–7.7]). The study elucidated that influences on IPV experience operate at two main levels: Background characteristics, such as age, education, childhood exposure to violence, and attitudes justifying wife-beating, and Immediate Precursors, including partner controlling behavior, partner drunkenness, and wife-initiated violence. A key finding from Parcon and Makani (2025) is that while these factors are generally significant, a woman's marital status creates differential risk profiles, indicating that distinct sets of factors place married and never-married women at risk for IPV.

Boncales et al. (2025) further reported a "high level of awareness" of Republic Act No. 9262 among respondents, with an overall mean of 3.83, and particular familiarity with its provisions on physical and sexual violence. Statistical analysis revealed a weak but statistically significant positive correlation ( $r=0.297$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) between the level of gender-based violence awareness and the level of gender-based violence experienced. The authors interpret this not as awareness causing violence, but as an indicator that heightened legal awareness may empower individuals to recognize and report previously hidden abuse, thereby initially increasing disclosure rates. The study concludes that while high awareness is a foundational element for combating GBV, its efficacy is moderated by the availability of robust support services and the need for interventions that address deep-seated patriarchal norms to transform community attitudes and reduce the normalization of violence.

The study by Puno-Balagosa et al. (2025) elucidates the significant associations between household violence and child morbidity in a sampled population. The research documented that 16% of mothers had experienced intimate partner violence (IPV) in the past year. In comparison, 62% of children had been subjected to violent discipline in the past month, with 12% of families experiencing both forms of violence concurrently. In terms of child health, fever was the most prevalent symptom reported in the two weeks preceding the survey (10.5%), followed by diarrhea (5.8%) and acute respiratory infections (ARI) (1.3%). Puno-Balagosa et al. (2025) found that both IPV and violent discipline were independently associated with significantly increased risks of ARI, fever, and diarrhea in children under five. Crucially, the co-occurrence of both IPV and violent discipline demonstrated a synergistic effect, substantially heightening the risk of child morbidity, with the strongest association observed for ARI (aOR: 3.5, 95% CI: 1.7–7.1). These

detrimental associations between household violence and poor child health outcomes were found to be consistent across socioeconomic strata, affecting both poor and wealthy households alike.

Based on the study by Matahum and Tanique (2025), an assessment of the Implementation of the Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) Act (Republic Act 9262) revealed a critical juncture between respondent knowledge and systemic practice. The research, which involved predominantly college-educated women aged 31-40, most of whom had received relevant training, found that a significant number possessed a comprehensive understanding of the law's provisions, procedures, and penalties. However, the authors identified significant operational deficiencies at the Barangay level, particularly in documentation, case management, and the issuance of Barangay Protection Orders (BPOs).

To address these systemic gaps, the authors proposed a multi-pronged policy enhancement strategy. A key recommendation is the issuance of a joint memorandum circular by the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Department of Health (DOH), and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to standardize and support Barangay-level execution. The study underscores the necessity of a collaborative, multi-disciplinary team approach integrating law enforcement, social workers, health professionals, and local councils to provide comprehensive services spanning healthcare, legal aid, and psychological support.

Furthermore, authors emphasize that sustained training, coupled with economic empowerment programs for women and the promotion of a culture of safety, is vital for reducing vulnerability and ensuring effective implementation of the law.

According to Subaşı and Ocakçı (2024), a child abuse and neglect prevention program (CANPP) grounded in social cognitive theory (SCT) demonstrated significant efficacy. Their study found that while control groups showed no change, the experimental group exhibited statistically significant increases in post-test and re-test scores on the Child Abuse and Neglect Awareness Scale (CNAASP) and the Child Abuse Potential Inventory (CAPI) compared to their pre-test scores ( $p < 0.05$ ). The authors conclude that the SCT-based CANPP is effective in both raising awareness of child abuse and reducing the abuse potential among pregnant women, recommending its application to similar populations as a proactive preventative measure.

According to Bali, Sembiah, and Burman (2024), there was a 10.4% prevalence of gender-based violence (GBV) among adolescents, with a significant gender disparity, as girls constitute 78% of the victims. Regression analysis identifies key risk factors, including female gender, membership in a scheduled caste or tribe, maternal education, having an intimate friend of the opposite sex, and holding attitudes that justify intimate partner violence. Bali, Sembiah, and Burman findings demonstrate that GBV is a significant issue before marriage, disproportionately affecting marginalized socioeconomic groups. The perpetuation of this violence is linked to entrenched patriarchal norms, such as the belief in male-dominated decision-making. Furthermore, the authors highlight a critical gap in national data on adolescent GBV, noting that violence in school and public settings is often normalized and unrecognized by victims. The study concludes by advocating for targeted, school-based interventions promoting gender equality and calls for more nuanced data on perpetrator profiles and violence typologies to inform effective strategies.

Gamongan and Moyao (2024) examine the effectiveness of the reintegration program among the survivors of child sexual abuse in Baguio City. It was revealed that while its structured protocols—including family assessments, gradual transitions, and aftercare—are theoretically sound and aligned with trauma-informed best practices, the intervention's effectiveness in practice is severely undermined by systemic and operational barriers. The program correctly identifies the essential role of multi-sectoral collaboration, particularly with Local Government Units (LGUs). However, its implementation is critically hampered by inadequate LGU support, insufficient family preparedness, and limited community resources, all of which pose ongoing risks to survivors' safety and sustainable reintegration. Without mandated, resourced, and active engagement from local authorities and broader systems, the program operates as a necessary yet insufficient effort, unable to ensure long-term protection or prevent revictimization. Thus, while the

intervention design is robust, its true efficacy remains conditional upon addressing these foundational gaps in coordination, resource allocation, and systemic accountability.

Based on an umbrella review of 44 publications, Gautschi and Lätsch (2024) conclude that no specific intervention type has established a clear, consistent, and robust track record for preventing or reducing the occurrence of child abuse and neglect. Their analysis found that across all intervention areas, the reported effects were frequently non-existent, small, or inconsistent. While positive effects of particular interventions in specific contexts were identified, the overall evidence base was undermined by several, and often severe, methodological problems in the extant research.

The study by Myint et al. (2024) evaluating attitudes toward spousal physical abuse among Filipino women identified a complex constellation of correlating factors. The findings indicate that acceptance of such abuse is significantly associated with experiences of specific forms of intimate partner violence (IPV), namely sexual and emotional violence, potentially mediated by psychological mechanisms such as eroded self-confidence and fear. Conversely, no significant association was found with physical IPV, a finding that contrasts with some existing literature. Furthermore, key sociodemographic characteristics served as protective factors, with older age, higher wealth quintiles, and secondary or higher education correlating with lower acceptance rates. Notably, a partner's lower educational attainment was highlighted as a risk factor, potentially inciting violence rooted in patriarchal dominance. While women's empowerment variables like employment and decision-making authority showed no significant association, awareness of the Barangay Violence Against Women (VAWC) law emerged as a significant protective factor, and controlling behavior by a partner was a strong correlate for increased acceptance of abuse.

The implications derived from Myint et al. (2024) underscore the need for multi-faceted interventions. The protective role of legal awareness suggests that policy efforts should prioritize disseminating knowledge of the VAWC law to empower women and reduce normative acceptance of abuse. The specific vulnerability linked to sexual and emotional violence, alongside the risk posed by partners' controlling behaviors and lower education, points to the necessity of targeted support programs that address psychological trauma and transform deep-seated patriarchal norms. The non-significant finding regarding women's empowerment indicators suggests that economic interventions alone may be insufficient without concurrently addressing ingrained societal and relational dynamics.

Based on the study by Castillo (2024), the respondent profile consisted primarily of married (80.4%) barangay officials who were college-educated (51.6%), with the largest age cohort being 36-40 years old (32.0%). The research assessed the implementation of the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act (RA 9262) across several key domains, revealing a high level of implementation, with an overall mean of 3.21. The highest rated aspect was the maintenance of confidentiality (Mean = 3.49), particularly regarding the secure handling of case logbooks. Conversely, the lowest-rated items pertained to avoiding mediation in cases requiring support (Mean = 3.02) and to ensuring women's involvement in barangay program planning (Mean = 3.13), indicating areas where practice may diverge from legal mandates. Furthermore, the author identified significant correlations between respondent profiles and their perceptions of RA 9262 implementation. A positive relationship was found between civil status and the overall perception of implementation ( $r = .142, p < .05$ ), with married respondents reporting higher ratings. Similarly, the respondent's position ( $r = .206, p < .01$ ) and educational attainment ( $r = .135, p < .05$ ) were significantly correlated with their perceptions, suggesting that officials with greater authority and higher levels of education perceived a more robust implementation. These findings underscore that the perceived effectiveness of RA 9262 at the barangay level is influenced by the socio-professional characteristics of the implementing officials.

Based on their analysis, Caeyers and Ringdal (2024) identify a critical asymmetry in the evidence base for violence prevention interventions in low- and middle-income countries. Their review affirms that parenting programs constitute a well-supported intervention, demonstrating substantial effectiveness in reducing violence against children by improving parenting skills and promoting non-violent discipline.

Conversely, the authors highlight a significant research gap regarding community-based programs specifically targeting VAC, noting a scarcity of rigorous evaluations on their impact. While the authors acknowledge that community-based interventions show proven effectiveness for reducing intimate partner violence through mobilization and education, the evidence for parallel success in preventing violence against children is markedly less developed. This discrepancy underscores an urgent need for more focused research on community-level mechanisms to protect children, even as parenting programs continue to show a robust and direct impact on reducing child maltreatment.

Based on their analysis, Bacchus et al. (2024) identify key cross-cutting mechanisms for reducing intimate partner violence and violence against children, which include enhancing communication and conflict resolution skills, encouraging reflection on harmful gender norms, and raising awareness of the adverse consequences of this violence. The authors note that therapeutic programs in high-income countries have shown promise in helping women and children process trauma and avoid future unhealthy relationships. However, the authors highlight critical evidence gaps, particularly in low and middle-income countries, concerning interventions for adolescents, post-abuse support, and integrated programs that address both the prevention and response to intimate partner violence and violence against children. They conclude that while coordinated prevention and response programs are supported by evidence, response-specific interventions remain rare, and their feasibility in middle-income countries is uncertain; however, integrating these efforts within health services presents a significant opportunity.

According to the global meta-analysis by Whitten, Tzoumakis, Green, and Dean (2023), childhood exposure to physical domestic and family violence is a widespread issue, with a pooled global prevalence of 17.3% for victims and 16.5% for witnesses. Their findings reveal significant regional disparities, with the highest prevalence in West Asia and Africa (victim = 42.8%; witness = 38.3%) and the lowest in the Developed Asia Pacific region (victim = 3.7%; witness = 5.4%). The study also identified a gender disparity, with males 25% more likely than females to be victims of this violence during childhood, while both genders were equally likely to witness it. The authors conclude that these regional variations likely reflect differences in underlying economic conditions, cultural norms, and service availability, and underscore that approximately one-in-six individuals globally are affected by exposure to domestic and family violence before the age of 18.

Lorenzana et al. (2024) noted that while a specialized care unit at the Philippine General Hospital–Child Protection Unit (PGH-CPU) has successfully increased reporting and multidisciplinary management of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) cases over a decade, a critical gap persists between reported cases and legal justice. The increased community and professional awareness has not translated into a proportional increase in cases reaching the court system. It was also noted that systemic barriers within the legal process hinder justice. Key challenges include a lack of client education on legal proceedings, limited access to affordable legal services, and the significant financial burden placed on families pursuing cases. To bridge this gap, the findings strongly suggest that healthcare interventions must evolve beyond medical and psychosocial support. Specifically, the unit must integrate enhanced legal guidance, forge partnerships with legal service providers, and develop mechanisms for financial assistance or advocacy to reduce costs for families. This holistic approach is necessary to transform clinical care into effective legal redress for survivors.

Based on the findings of Olobia (2023), instances of physical violence against women in the studied community were isolated and also impacted children, but did not reflect the prevailing sentiment of the general populace. The author reports that these cases were systematically reported to the Barangay Council and were typically resolved through settlements between the parties involved. The study identified that effective local governance was characterized by a safe and secure environment, a culture of respect, ongoing education, and strong institutional support, as central themes that collectively uphold women's rights while simultaneously addressing their vulnerabilities.

Awang, Apriana Woda, and Kristin (2022) identify the patriarchal power structure as the principal determinant of violence against women, characterized by the concentration of domestic authority within

the male head of household. This structure is perpetuated through societal endorsement, codified in customs, legal frameworks, and religious interpretations that systematically subordinate women, confine them to domestic roles, and legitimize male dominance, including the use of violence as a disciplinary measure. A key finding is the intergenerational transmission of violence, wherein children socializing in abusive environments exhibit a significantly higher propensity to become either victims or perpetrators later in life. This cycle reinforces gendered norms, with boys learning to associate masculinity with dominance and girls learning acquiescence to subordination. The research concludes that state inaction, specifically the failure to enact legislative reforms and ensure effective legal protection for victims, constitutes a critical enabling factor that allows this cycle of violence to persist.

Balahadia, Astoveza, and Jamolin (2022) findings indicate a high prevalence of violence against women and children (VAWC), predominantly manifesting as physical and emotional abuse. The demographic most affected is married women aged 16 to 30, with intimate partners being the primary perpetrators. A critical finding is the pronounced discrepancy between high awareness of anti-VAWC laws and low reporting rates, with over 70% of cases remaining unreported. This gap is attributed to profound socio-cultural barriers, including fear of retaliation, shame, and economic dependence that entraps victims, a situation unmitigated by educational attainment alone. Consequently, the research identifies a compelling consensus for technology-based interventions, with a strong preference for a confidential, mobile application that facilitates immediate emergency response and access to vital resources, offering a pivotal strategy to circumvent traditional reporting obstacles.

Manell et al.'s (2022) systematic review indicates that associations between macro-level factors such as community socioeconomic status, education, and violence against women are inconsistent. The most robust community-level risk factors identified were a history of childhood exposure to violence and urban residence. The analysis substantiates that the high prevalence of violence against women in specific countries is theoretically explained by two interconnected determinants: exposure to various forms of violence, including armed conflict and witnessing parental abuse, and the pervasive influence of patriarchal social norms.

Labrague, Quilatan, Cabaguing, and Cañal (2022) reveal a pattern of severe and co-occurring forms of abuse within a marital relationship. The victim experienced repeated sexual violence, including marital rape, and physical abuse that escalated over time and extended to a child in the household. This was compounded by pervasive emotional and psychological abuse, characterized by coercive control, public humiliation, and systematic degradation designed to isolate the victim and erode her self-worth. A critical factor perpetuating the abuse was economic violence, wherein the perpetrator withheld financial support, creating a state of total dependency that made separation untenable. The findings further highlight the intergenerational impact of violence, causing significant trauma to the children who were both direct victims and witnesses, and the profound barriers victims face, as the arduous legal process ultimately led to case attrition despite the availability of formal protections.

Based on a qualitative study of ten participants (five women and five adult children), Lee and Lee (2022) provide a nuanced analysis of the long-term physical and psychological impacts of domestic violence from the dual perspectives of survivors and their children. The researchers identified three primary themes for the women: (1) Living with Suffering, encompassing physical pain and emotional ambivalence; (2) Insecurity in Daily Life, characterized by low self-esteem and a profound sense of loss; and (3) Conformity in Coping Behaviors, which involved seeking social resources and a "living in the moment" mentality. For the children who witnessed the violence, two central themes emerged: (1) Barriers to Learning and Interactions with Peers, which led to social alienation and academic difficulties, and (2) A Sense of Threat to Life, resulting in a monotonous home life and pessimistic thinking.

The authors emphasize that their findings are deeply influenced by the local cultural context, where traditional Chinese tenets, such as the belief that familial ugliness should not be publicized, have created significant barriers to seeking help and early intervention. The study critically notes that despite attempts

to seek assistance from police, social workers, and healthcare providers, the support received was often perceived as ineffective or untimely, leaving both mothers and children dissatisfied with the recovery process. The authors conclude that a mother's personal social network is a vital source of support and highlight a critical need for improved, culturally sensitive responses from healthcare, police, and social work systems to effectively address the complex needs of domestic violence survivors and their children.

Based on their analysis, Valdez et al. (2022) argue that despite the Philippines high ranking on gender equality indices, the persistence of gender-based violence is rooted in a deeply entrenched patriarchal sociocultural landscape and exacerbated by systemic failures. The authors identify a culture of victim-blaming, economic abuse, and the normalization of misogyny—personified by the Duterte administration—as key sociocultural barriers that discourage help-seeking. The authors further contend that these issues were intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic, which trapped victims with abusers and fragmented essential services, while also highlighting the particular vulnerability of women facing intersecting forms of discrimination. To counter these challenges, the authors advocate for a multi-faceted approach that includes ensuring survivor-centered and trauma-informed responses, simplifying referral pathways, strengthening community-based systems, and fully implementing the Magna Carta of Women to eliminate discrimination and empower women through policy reform and a fundamental change in gender norms.

De Oliveira et al. (2021) revealed a predominance of female victims, with sexual abuse constituting the most common form of violence. The primary locus of risk was identified as the victim's own home, with perpetrators most often being male family members. The analysis delineated two age-based vulnerability peaks: early childhood and late adolescence. A critical finding was the significant exacerbation of this violence, including a sharp rise in self-inflicted injuries among female adolescents, during the COVID-19 pandemic, underscoring the severe mental health impact of social confinement. The research further highlights the profound challenge of underreporting, exacerbated by pandemic-related service disruptions, and notes that the phenomenon cuts across socioeconomic strata, indicating its deeply entrenched and pervasive nature driven by normative and structural factors.

Noer, Chadajah, and Rudiatin (2021) conducted a critical analysis of Indonesia's primary data collection systems on violence against women, which reveals significant institutional fragmentation. The government system (MoWECP Symphony) benefits from a mandatory, standardized reporting framework but suffers from an absence of data verification mechanisms, leading to questions about its validity and aggregation accuracy. Conversely, the system managed by the national human rights institution (Komnas Perempuan) yields more reliable, real-time data through partner collaboration. However, it is hampered by its voluntary nature, resulting in chronically low reporting compliance and an uncoordinated structure. The salient finding is that the creation of an effective integrated data system is impeded by two core challenges: bureaucratic, inefficient, and mandatory reporting protocols; and profound structural barriers, including technological disparities and entrenched institutional sectoralism, which collectively obstruct evidence-based policy formulation.

Based on the study by De Asis et al. (2021), the respondent profile was predominantly composed of married (64.31%), female (51.69%), high school graduates (42.94%) aged 28-37, with a monthly income of less than Php 10,000 and 1-3 children. The authors further reported a high level of awareness of Republic Act 9262 across all key dimensions measured. The findings indicated that the vast majority of respondents were aware of the law's nature and character, the specific acts constituting violence against women and children, and the associated filing processes, penalties, and consequences. This suggests that core information about the anti-VAWC law has been effectively disseminated within this community, even among groups with moderate levels of formal education and lower socioeconomic status.

Based on the thorough examination of various reports and studies conducted by Jewkes (2021), the significant findings regarding Violence Against Women (VAW) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) highlight a widespread global crisis characterized by specific patterns and underlying causes. The scale is

immense: one in three women will experience intimate partner violence (IPV) in their lifetime, and more than one billion children will experience violence every year. In some places, like the Philippines, national data shows that a partner has physically, sexually, or emotionally abused 17.5% of women between the ages of 15 and 49. Thousands of cases are reported to the police every year, but many more go unreported because of a culture of silence and victim-blaming.

Structural gender inequality and harmful social norms that support male dominance and female subordination are always seen as the root causes. Restrictive masculine norms are a big part of the problem. For example, the idea that real men should be the breadwinners and have the last say at home can lead to violence when these norms are challenged. Economic stress, poverty, and displacement made worse by crises and humanitarian situations greatly raise the risk. Community norms that accept violence, weak legal penalties, and systemic barriers like discriminatory laws that make it harder for women to be financially independent and leave abusive situations all make violence more likely.

The effects are serious and many, making this a major public health and human rights issue. For women and girls, the effects can be deadly, cause physical injuries, cause long-term psychological trauma, harm their sexual and reproductive health, and make it harder for them to make money. Children who are exposed to violence have brains that don't grow properly, learn bad ways to deal with stress, and are more likely to pass on violence to their children. These effects hurt people's health and make it harder for society as a whole to grow and stay stable.

To effectively prevent these problems, the authors go beyond individual-focused responses and address the root causes of the system. Evidence indicates the imperative for multi-sectoral, collaborative strategies that incorporate legal reform, economic empowerment for women, and the reformation of detrimental gender norms. Successful intervention programs, such as those in the INSPIRE framework and the What Works initiative, share key design principles. They are carefully planned with a theory of change specific to the situation, address many causes of violence, support survivors, involve both men and women, last long enough and be intense enough, and have well-trained staff. In the end, investing in these all-encompassing prevention strategies is not only the right thing to do, but it is also necessary for achieving gender equality, public health, and long-term development.

Yoshioka, Palatino, Nazareno, and Operario (2020) found a high prevalence of intimate partner violence (IPV) among women and girls in the Philippines, with 23.9% reporting experiences in their current partnership. Emotional violence was the most common form (19.0%), followed by physical (10.1%) and sexual violence (3.4%). A significant proportion of respondents held attitudes justifying wife-beating (11.2%) and reported a lack of sexual agency, including an inability to refuse sex (10.5%) or negotiate condom use (20.4%). Crucially, multivariable analysis established that experiences of IPV, particularly emotional violence, were significantly associated with a reduced ability to insist on condom use. The perception that a husband is justified in beating his wife was also correlated with diminished sexual agency. These findings underscore that IPV directly undermines women's sexual health and autonomy, indicating an urgent need for interventions that address both violence prevention and the promotion of sexual agency.

Based on the study by Salting (2020), the sample of women displayed varying levels of socioeconomic and empowerment indicators: 67% had completed at least Grade 12. Yet, only 9% owned a house or lot, and 23% had a personal bank account. A high proportion (85%) participated in all key household decisions, and a small minority (11%) justified wife-beating under certain circumstances. When measured on a composite empowerment scale, 42% of women were classified as having a low level of empowerment, 24% moderate, and 34% high. Empowerment was positively associated with age and household wealth and negatively associated with a higher number of children.

Furthermore, the author identified a significant association between women's empowerment and experiences of spousal violence. Among the 10,778 women who reported lifetime spousal violence, 14% had experienced physical or sexual violence from their current partner. The prevalence of this violence was lowest (10%) among women in the high empowerment category. A multivariate logistic regression

confirmed that even after controlling for sociodemographic factors like age, wealth, and number of children, a higher empowerment level remained significantly associated with lower odds of experiencing physical or sexual violence. The analysis also revealed that increased household wealth and a lower number of children were independently associated with a reduced likelihood of violence.

Bahalidia and Mortel (2020) developed a mobile application for reporting violence against women to improve prevention and response efforts. The main findings show that this kind of system would serve three main purposes: to raise public awareness and empower people through social media sharing, to connect survivors directly with support organizations, and to provide the government and communities with a platform for collaboration. Also, the framework is meant to produce useful data-driven insights by identifying common types of abuse, mapping areas where abuse occurs frequently, and tracking how often cases occur. The goal of this data is to help the planning and improvement of targeted VAWC prevention programs and policies.

Burton (2023) revealed a complex pattern in the social support histories of women who experienced intimate partner abuse. Contrary to the researcher's initial assumption, a notable portion of participants (5 of 19) reported having a positive support system during childhood before entering abusive relationships. However, for most, support eroded significantly upon entering the abusive relationship, with 14 of 17 participants reporting having no support system while in abuse. This indicates that a decline in support type often occurs between childhood and the abusive period, rather than poor childhood support being a universal precursor.

The data further supported existing literature that a personal decision or epiphany moment was critical for leaving, often following an extreme incident. Post-escape, a majority of those who left (9 of 14) reported rebuilding positive support systems. The research found that positive support systems encouraged leaving and did not, as sometimes theorized, foster a false sense of security that prolonged abuse. Ultimately, while external support was beneficial, the participants' own resolve was the central factor in initiating escape and recovery.

Ghidei et al. (2022) identified two primary types of virtual interventions for domestic violence (DV) and sexual violence (SV): digital safety planning tools for individuals currently at risk, and virtual psychological therapies for survivors. The analysis of 21 included studies indicated that digital safety tools, such as online programs and applications, effectively increased safety-promoting behaviors and self-efficacy among users, though most were not yet publicly available.

Conversely, the review found a lack of virtual psychological interventions designed for individuals actively experiencing ongoing abuse. The evidence demonstrated that virtually delivered trauma-focused therapies, including cognitive processing therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy delivered via telehealth, were effective and acceptable in reducing PTSD and depression symptoms among survivors. However, significant equity gaps were noted, with limited interventions tailored for underserved populations such as Indigenous, LGBTQ2S+, or non-English speaking communities. Key implementation barriers included a lack of reliable technology access, safety risks for users in shared environments, and potential challenges with user attrition during intensive therapeutic phases.

The analysis by Sales (2020) revealed that predisposing demographic variables were significant predictors of mental health service utilization among survivors of emotional abuse. Specifically, gender and race/ethnicity statistically predicted service use, with females having significantly higher odds of accessing services than males, and White participants having significantly higher odds of accessing services compared to Hispanic and Asian participants.

On the other hand, the enabling and need variables examined did not demonstrate predictive utility. The combination of annual income, type of health insurance, and level of functional impairment did not statistically predict the use of mental health services in this population. Therefore, while demographic identities were influential, factors related to economic resources and the perceived need for care were not significant predictors in this study.

Naganag (2022) found that victim-survivors primarily experienced physical violence, with all participants reporting forms such as hitting and choking, while psychological abuse, particularly repeated verbal abuse, was also highly prevalent. A majority of participants (80.95%) reported receiving mandated support services, including emergency shelter, medical treatment, and skills training facilitated by local welfare offices and TESDA. However, significant institutional challenges hindered the effectiveness of the Women and Children's Desk. Key problems included chronic understaffing, which limited regular follow-up and case monitoring, and the frequent, untraceable relocation of victim-survivors due to shame or economic necessity. Furthermore, the convergence and response time of supporting government agencies were described as slow and delayed, impeding timely intervention.

Amasol (2024) identified physical abuse as the most common form of violence against women and children, often escalating from domestic disputes, with psychological and economic abuse, such as intimidation and restrictions on employment, also being prevalent. These forms of violence primarily affected housewives and youth, with incidents typically occurring within intimate partner relationships.

Regarding program implementation, community-based initiatives such as the "Talakayan sa Hapagkainan" (discussions over meals) and educational seminars on Republic Act 9262 were key strategies for raising awareness and facilitating dialogue. However, significant challenges included severe resource constraints that limited logistical support and a frequent pattern of case discontinuation, in which victims withdrew their complaints after reconciling with perpetrators, thereby undermining legal recourse and program effectiveness.

### ***Synthesis of State-of-the-Art***

Based on a synthesis of recent local and foreign literature and studies, the causative factors of violence against women and children (VAWC) are consistently framed within an interconnected web of patriarchal norms, socioeconomic disparities, and intergenerational cycles of abuse.

The studies of Awang et al. (2022) and Manell et al. (2022) identify patriarchal power structures as the primary root cause of VAWC. In the Philippines, Yoshioka et al. (2020), Salting (2020), and Myint et al. (2024) document high acceptance of spousal violence and male controlling behaviors linked to intimate partner violence. Santos and De Guzman (2025) and Balahadia et al. (2022) profile typical victims as married women of reproductive age with low socioeconomic status and economic dependence. Labrague Jr. et al. (2022) and Bali et al. (2024) detail co-occurring physical, sexual, emotional, and economic violence.

At the community level and within institutions, gaps persist in Philippine municipalities; the studies of Castillo (2024), Matahum and Taniue (2025), and Boncales et al. (2025) find inconsistent barangay implementation of Republic Act 9262, with bureaucratic challenges and reliance on amicable settlements. Gautschi and Lätsch (2024) and Bacchus et al. (2024) note the lack of robust evidence for the effectiveness of interventions. Underreporting, driven by fear, shame, and impunity, is highlighted by Noer et al. (2021) and Valdez et al. (2022). Theoretically, Puno-Balagosa et al. (2025) and Whitten et al. (2023) explore the cycle of violence. De Oliveira et al. (2021) show that COVID-19 intensified violence. Boncales et al. (2025) note online shaming as an emerging trend. Balahadia et al. (2022) find that high awareness does not translate to action.

Balahadia and Mortel (2020) propose tech integration to address rising VAWC. Jewkis et al. (2021) note that interventions often lack essential elements and fail to reduce violence. Ullman et al. (2025) focus on downstream survivor services, neglecting upstream strategies like poverty reduction. Lorenzana et al. (2024) examine legal and biopsychosocial outcomes for child sexual abuse survivors. Naganag (2022) and Amasol (2024) identify physical and psychological abuse as predominant, with barriers like resource constraints and case withdrawal. Burton (2023) and Sales (2020) underscore structural factors (social support, gender, race) shaping survivor pathways. Ghidei et al. (2022) reveal logistical, financial, and technological implementation gaps. Gamongan and Moyao (2024) assess reintegration program effectiveness for sexual abuse victims.

### **Research Gap**

Despite extensive research on Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC), a critical gap exists in conducting localized, municipality-level analysis within the Philippines. While national studies identify broad risk factors like patriarchal norms and poverty, the specific causative dynamics within unique communities such as Pili, Camarines Sur, remain unexplored. This prevents the development of tailored, context-specific interventions. Furthermore, a significant disconnect persists between identifying these root causes and evaluating the frontline institutional responses. There is a pronounced lack of focused research assessing the effectiveness, operational challenges, and community impact of police-led (PNP) VAWC desks. The capacity of this unit, its specific prevention and support strategies, and its role in mitigating local causative factors are severely under-investigated. This gap is compounded by systemic underreporting and a lack of integrated data, which obscures the full scope of abuse, especially against children. Therefore, the literature lacks a cohesive study that directly links localized demographic and socio-cultural drivers of VAWC to a systematic evaluation of the primary law enforcement programs designed to address them, a vital area that this research addresses.

Based on the reviewed related studies and literature, differences were noted; however, the gap was found in the previous studies. No research has yet been conducted on the implementation level of the Violence Against Women and their children (VAWC) program in Pili, Camarines Sur, C/Y 2025-2026. Hence, this is the gap this study seeks to fill.

### **METHODS**

#### **Research Design**

The researcher used a descriptive-correlational research design to collect the data for the present investigation. The descriptive research method is a valuable tool for researchers to inform new policies, examine policy implementation, analyze policy processes, and describe patterns in data.

The descriptive approach is intended to acquire data on the current situation. The main objective is to depict a scenario as it was at the time of the research and to investigate specific occurrences of phenomena. McCombes (2022) noted that a population, circumstance, or phenomenon is intended to be correctly and methodically described through descriptive research. The "what," "where," "when," and "how" inquiries can be answered, but "why" questions cannot. Additionally, the researcher observed and measured the variables without controlling or altering them. Moreover, the process of descriptive research goes beyond mere data gathering. It involves interpreting the meaning or significance of what is described.

On the other hand, the correlational research method was used in the present study because this study specifically aimed to determine whether a statistically significant relationship exists between two key variables: (1) the level of occurrence of violence against women and their children, and (2) the extent of implementation of the program implemented by the PNP on the violence against women and their children.

#### **Respondents of the Study**

The respondents of this study consisted of women from Pili, Camarines Sur, Bicol, who had engaged in violent behavior toward their husbands or intimate partners. Participants were carefully chosen based on specific qualifications to ensure the study's credibility. All respondents were at least 20 years old, with the youngest participant being 24 years of age. They were either married, separated, or in cohabiting relationships and had committed at least one documented or self-reported act of violence, which could be physical, emotional, psychological, social, sexual, or financial/economic in nature. Additionally, all participants were current residents of Pili, Camarines Sur, to maintain the study's geographical focus.

The research initially sought a larger sample size, but only 45 women ultimately participated. Many potential respondents declined involvement due to fear of being identified, social stigma surrounding female-perpetrated violence, or concerns about confidentiality. Some worried about community judgment or legal repercussions, while others hesitated to acknowledge their experiences due to prevailing stereotypes

that women are not typically aggressors in relationships. To encourage participation, researchers guaranteed complete anonymity throughout the study. Despite the limited number of respondents, their input provided crucial insights into the causative factors of their violent behavior and its effects on their children, contributing to understanding this under-researched aspect of domestic violence in the local context.

### **Sampling Technique**

The study employed a purposive sampling technique to select 45 women respondents aged 20 years and above from Pili, Camarines Sur, who met the specific criteria of having experienced violence against their intimate partners. This non-probability sampling method was chosen to intentionally target individuals with direct experience of the phenomenon under investigation, ensuring that participants could provide meaningful insights into the level of occurrence of VAWC. The researcher herself identified potential respondents through community referrals and local networks, then applied strict screening criteria for a history of violence, residency, and willingness to participate. The technique enabled in-depth data collection despite the study's sensitive nature, though it limited generalizability due to the non-random selection process and participants' self-reported experiences.

### **Data Gathering Tools**

The study utilized a structured survey questionnaire as the primary data collection method collection tool, designed to systematically measure the level of occurrence of VAWC perpetrated partner violence and the extent of program implementation of Pili MPS. The questionnaire used a 5-point Likert scale to quantify respondents' attitudes, experiences, and perceptions regarding the factors influencing their violent behavior. This scaling method enabled a precise assessment of the intensity of agreement or disagreement across key variables, including physical, emotional, psychological, social, sexual, and financial/economic.

To ensure validity and reliability, experts in gender studies reviewed the questionnaire, PNP personnel specializing in women and children's violence, and social work, and a pilot test was conducted to refine clarity and relevance. The tool was administered through face-to-face interviews to accommodate potential literacy challenges and to establish rapport, which was crucial given the sensitive subject matter. Responses were then analyzed statistically to identify patterns and correlations among the factors contributing to violence. The use of a standardized Likert-scale questionnaire enhanced data reliability while enabling systematic comparison across respondents.

### **Questionnaire**

The primary data collection instrument for this study was a researcher-made questionnaire specifically designed to investigate the causative factors of violence against women and their children in Pili, Camarines Sur. As the principal investigator crafted this tool, it was meticulously tailored to address the study's unique objectives and local context.

**Preparation of the Questionnaire.** The research instrument used in this study was a carefully self-constructed survey questionnaire designed to investigate the frequency level of violence against women and their children toward their intimate partners and the extent of implementation of the programs implemented by Pili MPS in Pili, Camarines Sur. Developed through a rigorous process, the questionnaire was crafted after an extensive review of relevant literature and studies on domestic violence, gender studies, and psychosocial factors to ensure it comprehensively addressed key dimensions, including the effects on children.

To ensure accessibility and clarity, the survey instrument was translated into Filipino, the local language, enabling respondents to understand and engage with the questions fully. The researcher also helped explain any technical or complex terminology during administration to ensure accurate comprehension. The questionnaire primarily utilized a 5-Point Likert scale to measure respondents' perceptions and experiences, supplemented by demographic questions.

Before implementation, the instrument underwent expert validation by professionals in gender studies, PNP personnel specializing in women and children's violence, social workers, academe, and judicial authority. It was then pilot tested with a select group of eligible women to refine question clarity, eliminate ambiguity, and enhance cultural appropriateness. Careful attention was given to question neutrality, logical flow, and sensitivity to minimize bias and ensure respondent comfort. This thorough development process resulted in a reliable, valid, and contextually appropriate tool that effectively captured the complex realities of female-perpetrated partner violence while upholding ethical considerations.

**Validation of the Questionnaire.** To ensure the reliability and validity of the research instrument, the questionnaire underwent rigorous validation. The researcher assessed its internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha, a statistical measure that evaluates how closely related the items are as a group.

The analysis revealed that physical violence obtained an alpha of 0.785; emotional violence, 0.879; financial/economic abuse, 0.778; psychological abuse, 0.992; sexual abuse, 0.858; social abuse, 0.893; physical abuse prevention program, 0.902; emotional abuse response program, 0.883; financial/economic abuse mitigation, 0.925; psychological abuse support services, 0.895; sexual abuse protection measures, 0.911; and social abuse community programs, 0.929 respectively. Although a value of 0.70 and higher is often considered the criterion for internally consistent established factors (Hair, J.F.J., Anderson, R.E., Tatham, R.L., Black, 1998), Nunnally (Nunnally, 1978) suggests that a value of 0.50 to 0.60 is acceptable in the early stages of each factor, and is above 0.50; both factors are accepted as being reliable for the research.

In addition, factor analysis was used to determine if the data were suitable for the procedure. Two critical preliminary tests used for this purpose are the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. These tests were used to validate the fundamental assumption of exploratory factor analysis (EFA), namely that the data contain meaningful relationships that a smaller number of latent factors can explain. Table 2 presents the results of the exploration factor analysis.

The data revealed that for the construct level of occurrence of violence against women and their children, the KMO statistic was 0.876, with Bartlett's Test yielding a significant result ( $\chi^2(1128) = 4450.215, p < 0.001$ ). Similarly, for the construct extent of the program's implementation by the PNP, the data also demonstrated high suitability for EFA, with a KMO value of 0.839 and a significant Bartlett's Test ( $\chi^2(1128) = 3865.771, p < 0.001$ ).

Based on the calculations, the KMO values of 0.876 and 0.839 both fall within the meritorious range according to Kaiser's classification, indicating that the patterns of correlations for both sets of variables are compact and highly suitable for the extraction of latent factors. This suggests that the items within each scale share substantial common variance, meaning they effectively tap into their respective underlying constructs: the level of occurrence of VAWC and program implementation.

Furthermore, the highly significant results ( $p < 0.001$ ) of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity for both datasets allow for the definitive rejection of the null hypothesis that the correlation matrices are identity matrices. This confirms the presence of systematic, non-random relationships among the variables, which is a fundamental prerequisite for conducting EFA. In essence, the data for both the independent variable (causative factors) and the dependent variable (program implementation) possess a strong underlying structure, affirming that the instruments are well-designed to measure the constructs they purport to measure.

Based on the exemplary results of the preliminary factorability tests, this analysis strongly recommends proceeding with the final survey. The high KMO values and significant Bartlett's tests indicate that the survey instruments are psychometrically sound, and the collected data from a larger sample were appropriate for sophisticated multivariate analysis.

There was no statistical evidence to suggest a need for item revision or scale alteration. The final survey can be deployed with confidence, and the subsequent data were suitable for confirmatory analyses,

including the planned EFA to definitively establish the factor structures and subsequent inferential tests to examine the relationship between the level of causative factors and the extent of PNP program implementation.

**Administration and Retrieval of the Questionnaire.** The researcher administered the survey questionnaire to 74 pre-selected respondents in Pili, Camarines Sur, after securing approvals from the Pili Municipal Police Station and local authorities. Questionnaires were distributed in barangay halls and health centers, with the researcher available for clarifications but not conducting interviews to maintain the objectivity of responses. Participants completed the forms anonymously, with follow-ups arranged for those needing more time.

All surveys were collected within a set timeframe and checked for completeness before encoding. The paper-based method ensured accessibility while maintaining confidentiality. No personal identifiers were collected, and participation was voluntary throughout the process. This approach balanced data quality with ethical considerations for sensitive research.

**Data Gathering Procedures.** The study employed a systematic data collection process, beginning with securing official approvals from the Pili Municipal Police Station and local authorities in Pili, Camarines Sur. The researcher distributed the validated questionnaire to the 74 pre-selected respondents through controlled paper-based surveys administered in barangay centers and community spaces. Participants were given a 7-day completion period with scheduled follow-ups to ensure response rates while maintaining convenience. All collected questionnaires underwent immediate validation checks for completeness before data encoding. Strict confidentiality protocols were enforced throughout the process, with no personal identifiers collected and informed consent obtained from all participants. The respondents were explicitly informed of their right to withdraw at any time if they felt uncomfortable. This systematic approach ensured reliable data collection while addressing the sensitive nature of research on female-perpetrated partner violence.

### Statistical Treatment of the Data

The researcher utilized several tools to treat the data gathered. The respondents' answers were systematically classified and tabulated according to the variables included in the study. The statistical tools are frequency counts, the percentage technique, the weighted mean, Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient, and Student's t-test.

**Frequency Count.** This is to tally the respondents' perceptions and determine the percentages for each response.

**Percentage Technique.** The nominal data used consist of the raw frequencies of occurrence of the characteristics under consideration. Ordinary data/treatment is based on the frequency through the percentage formula. The formula is shown below:

$$P = \frac{f}{N} \times 100$$

Where:

P = Percent  
f = Frequency  
N = Number of Cases

**Weighted Mean.** This approach allows researchers to give greater weight to certain data points that may be more representative or relevant to their study. Here is the formula:

WM = TWFN

Where: WM = weighted mean  
F = frequency  
W = weight of the category of responses  
N = number of responses  
T = total

**Five-Point Likert Scale.** The Likert-type scale was used in quantifying and interpreting the weighted mean for each indicator included in the study, with the following interpretations:

**The Frequency Level of Violence Against Women and their Children**

Scale	Rating	Interpretation
5	4.20 - 5.00	Always (A)
4	3.40 - 4.19	Often (O)
3	2.60 - 3.39	Sometimes (S)
2	1.80 - 2.59	Rarely (R)
1	1.00 - 1.79	Never (N)

**On the Extent of Implementation of the Pili Municipal Police Station Program on Violence Against Women and their Children**

Scale	Rating	Interpretation
5	4.20 - 5.00	Fully Implemented (FI)
4	3.40 - 4.19	Implemented (I)
3	2.60 - 3.39	Moderately Implemented (MI)
2	1.80 - 2.59	Slightly Implemented (SI)
1	1.00 - 1.79	Not Implemented (NI)

**Spearman Rho.** This non-parametric measure of rank correlation evaluates the strength and direction of the monotonic relationship between two continuous or ordinal variables. The formula is shown below:

$$r_s = 1 - \frac{6 \sum d_i^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

where:

- $\rho$  = Spearman's Rho Coefficient
- $d_i$  = Difference between the Ranks of Corresponding Variables
- $n$  = number of observations

Student's t-test for testing the significance of Spearman's rho.

$$t = \frac{\rho \sqrt{n-2}}{\sqrt{1-\rho^2}}$$

Where:

- $t$  = t-test statistic
- $r$  = Spearman's Rho Coefficient
- $n$  = Number of Paired Observations

The interpretation of the results of Spearman's Rho and Student's T-test was based on comparing the computed value with its respective critical value, with due consideration of the degrees of freedom and the level of significance. Hence, if the computed value is less than the tabular value, the research hypothesis is accepted; however, if the computed value is greater than the tabular value, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Significance level was set at 0.05.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The Implementation of Violence Against Women and their Children (VAWC) Program in Pili, Camarines Sur: An Assessment

#### The Frequency Level of Violence Against Women and Their Children in Pili, Camarines Sur

Violence Against Women and Their Children (VAWC) manifests not as a monolithic issue, but a complicated one that is rooted in specific local ecosystems. In the municipality of Pili, Camarines Sur, its occurrence is driven by a unique combination of factors. This study goes beyond national statistics to examine how socio-economic stressors, cultural norms, institutional accessibility, and community discourse work together to cause VAWC in this area. This study seeks to delineate the specific topography of risk, thereby establishing an empirical foundation for precision-targeted prevention and robust community-based support systems.

**Physical Abuse.** Physical abuse is defined as any act or series of acts that causes or inflicts physical harm or bodily injury upon another person. It involves the intentional use of force that results in pain, impairment, or injury. Table 1 illustrates the frequency level of violence against women and their children in Pili, Camarines along with Physical Abuse.

Table 1. *The Frequency Level of Violence Against Women and Their Children in Pili, Camarines Sur Along with Physical Abuse*

Indicators	WM	Interpretation	Rank
1. My partner/husband physically hits or slaps me.	4.24	Always	2
2. My partner/husband pushes, kicks, or chokes me during arguments.	4.11	Often	3
3. I am threatened with weapons (e.g., knives, sticks) at home.	4.09	Often	4
4. My partner/husband harms my children physically.	3.96	Often	6
5. I sustain bruises or injuries due to domestic violence.	3.58	Often	8
6. My partner/husband destroys household items in anger.	4.04	Often	5
7. My partner inflicts pain in ways that won't leave visible marks (e.g., hair-pulling, twisting arms).	4.27	Always	1
8. I am forced to stay silent about physical abuse due to fear.	3.60	Often	7
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.99</b>	<b>Often</b>	

**Legend:**

- 4.20 – 5.00 – Always (A)
- 3.40 – 4.19 – Often (O)
- 2.60 – 3.39 – Sometimes (S)
- 1.80 – 2.59 – Rarely (R)
- 1.00 – 1.79 – Never (N)

It clearly appears in the tabulated data that among the eight (8) indicators employed by the research, the following obtained a descriptive rating of "Always" were: my partner inflicts pain in ways that won't leave visible marks (e.g., hair-pulling, twisting arms), 4.27, and my partner/husband physically hits or slaps me, 4.24. While my partner/husband pushes, kicks, or chokes me during arguments, 4.11; I am threatened with weapons (e.g., knives, sticks) at home, 4.09; my partner/husband destroys household items in anger, 4.04; my partner/husband harms my children physically, 3.96; I am forced to stay silent about physical abuse to fear, 3.60; and I sustain bruises or injuries due to domestic violence, 3.58 obtained a descriptive rating of "Often."

The data suggests that physical abuse happens often and in a planned way in this case. This is shown by the fact that most of the time, the abuser uses methods that cause pain without leaving visible

marks, as well as direct physical assault. This pattern indicates a deliberate approach to coercive control, wherein offenders utilize both overt and covert violence to assert dominance while intentionally obstructing external detection and intervention.

This hierarchy of violence shows that there is a planned strategy behind it. The primary dependence on non-marking abuse mechanisms serves to isolate victims by diminishing the credibility of their suffering to authorities, thereby perpetuating a private realm of impunity. The presence of extreme, life-threatening violence substantiates an atmosphere of widespread fear, perpetuated by enforced silence.

The findings on systematic physical abuse, particularly the strategic use of non-marking violence to conceal evidence and enforce control, are strongly supported by existing scholarship. This aligns with the work of Park (2021), who identified violence as a tool to reassert threatened masculine authority, and the Prevention Collaborative (2022), which establishes gender inequality as a foundational cause. The significant underreporting, driven by fear, mirrors the observation by Balahadia, Astoveza, and Jamolin (2022) of a critical gap between high awareness and low official reporting due to socio-cultural barriers. Furthermore, the intergenerational transmission and normalization of this violence within the home substantiate the findings of Awang, Apriana Woda, and Kristin (2022) on the patriarchal cycle of abuse.

Based on the aforementioned data, there are two main effects: First, it shows a serious flaw in protection systems, since the most common abuses are designed to avoid legal scrutiny, meaning people need special training to spot coercive control that is not based on physical evidence. Second, the frequency and severity call for coordinated responses that protect victims, punish offenders, and break down the social norms that allow this hidden violence to happen.

**Emotional Abuse.** Emotional abuse is a pattern of non-physical behavior designed to control, isolate, manipulate, or degrade another person. It systematically undermines an individual's self-worth, autonomy, and mental well-being. Unlike physical abuse, its effects are often invisible but can cause profound and long-lasting psychological harm.

A breakdown of survey responses on the frequency level of violence against women and their children in Pili, Camarines Sur, along with emotional abuse, is shown in Table 2. The reported instances of emotional abuse reveal a specific behavior occurs with the greatest frequency, classified as Always: my partner/husband uses my children to manipulate me emotionally, 4.31. Several other indicators are reported as occurring "Often" these include I am blamed for all problems in the household, 3.87; I am isolated from friends/family by my partner/relative, 3.76; I am called derogatory names (e.g., "stupid," "worthless"), 3.73; My achievements are belittled or dismissed, 3.67; and my partner/husband threatens to leave or abandon me, 3.51. One (1) indicator falls within the "Sometimes" category: I am made to feel crazy or told I'm mentally unstable, 3.20. Finally, one (1) indicator is reported as "Rarely": my partner/husband constantly insults or humiliates me (2.49).

Table 2. *The Frequency Level of Violence Against Women and Their Children in Pili, Camarines Sur Along with Emotional Abuse*

Indicators	WM	Interpretation	Rank
1. My partner/husband constantly insults or humiliates me.	2.49	Rarely	8
2. I am blamed for all problems in the household.	3.87	Often	2
3. My partner/husband threatens to leave or abandon me.	3.51	Often	6
4. I am called derogatory names (e.g., "stupid," "worthless").	3.73	Often	4
5. My achievements are belittled or dismissed.	3.67	Often	5
6. I am isolated from friends/family by my partner/relative.	3.76	Often	3
7. My partner/husband uses my children to manipulate me emotionally.	4.31	Always	1
8. I am made to feel crazy or told I'm mentally unstable.	3.20	Sometimes	7

<b>Average</b>	<b>3.57</b>	<b>Often</b>
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The data suggest that emotional abuse in this context is characterized by a primary strategy of exploiting the mother-child relationship to exert psychological control, augmented by recurrent methods of blame, isolation, and degradation. This shows a systematic pattern of coercive control, in which the abuser uses the victim's core relationships and sense of self-worth to dominate and entrap the victim. Using children as emotional leverage is particularly severe because it weaponizes caregiving and multiple traumas. The combination of other common behaviors, such as isolation, verbal abuse, and threats of abandonment, weakens the victim's support network, independence, and sense of reality, making them very dependent. The reported infrequency of persistent humiliation does not mitigate its severity; rather, it may indicate a more strategic implementation of diverse abusive methods.

The above findings on emotional abuse, particularly the strategic use of children for manipulation and the combination of isolation, blame, and degradation, align with established findings on coercive control. This reflects the patriarchal structures identified by the Prevention Collaborative (2022) as a root cause of violence, where abuse functions to enforce dominance. The specific scheme of using children to entrap a victim psychologically exemplifies the pattern of coercive and controlling behavior central to the definition of family violence outlined by Safe and Equal (2024).

Furthermore, the profound isolation and emotional harm inflicted on both mothers and children corroborate the thematic findings of Lee and Lee (2022), whose research detailed the long-term psychological suffering and social alienation experienced by survivors and their children. Lastly, this pattern of emotional abuse scheme underscores the interconnected determinants of intimate partner violence and its function in undermining autonomy, as analyzed within the broader evidence base synthesized by Jewkes (2021).

Based on the aforementioned findings, there is a need for specialized assistance that recognizes child-based manipulation as a fundamental aspect of abuse, necessitating trauma-informed care for both the mother and the children. For prevention and response systems, it emphasizes the necessity to detect and tackle coercive control that may not have tangible evidence, underscoring the vital significance of community education and professional training to identify these non-physical manifestations of domestic violence.

**Financial/Economic Abuse.** Financial/Economic abuse is a systematic pattern of controlling, exploiting, or sabotaging a woman's access to and use of economic resources to induce dependency, enforce subordination, and limit their ability to escape an abusive relationship. It is a strong form of coercive control that often goes hand in hand with physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, making it very hard to feel safe and free. Table 3 displays the frequency level of violence against women and their children in Pili, Camarines Sur, along with financial/economic abuse. The data on economic/financial abuse indicates that several behaviors occur with a frequency rated as "Often."

These include my partner/husband deliberately makes me incapable of living independently, 3.91; my partner/relative sabotages my job or livelihood, 3.89; I am denied access to basic needs (food, medicine, etc.) as punishment, 3.80; my expenses are monitored and restricted excessively, 3.69; I am forbidden from working or earning independently, 3.51; and I am forced to beg for money for daily needs, 3.42. Conversely, two (2) indicators received a verbal description of "Sometimes:" my partner/husband controls all money, leaving me with none (3.22), and my partner/husband takes my income without consent (2.96).

Table 3. *The Frequency Level of Violence Against Women and Their Children in Pili, Camarines Sur Along with Financial/Economic Abuse*

Indicators	WM	Interpretation	Rank
1. My partner/husband controls all money, leaving me with none.	3.22	Sometimes	7
2. I am forbidden from working or earning independently.	3.51	Often	5
3. My partner/husband takes my income without consent.	2.96	Sometimes	8
4. I am denied access to basic needs (food, medicine, etc.) as punishment.	3.80	Often	3
5. My expenses are monitored and restricted excessively.	3.69	Often	4
6. I am forced to beg for money for daily needs.	3.42	Often	6
7. My partner/relative sabotages my job or livelihood.	3.89	Often	2
8. My partner/husband deliberately makes me incapable of living independently.	3.91	Often	1
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.55</b>	<b>Often</b>	

The data reveals a prevalent pattern of financial/economic abuse characterized by systematic behaviors designed to enforce dependency and restrict autonomy. This indicates that financial control is not merely a byproduct of conflict but a calculated tool of coercion, in which the sabotage of livelihoods and the denial of basic needs serve as primary mechanisms of entrapment. Frequent schemes to sabotage employment and restrict independent living directly undermine the victim's capacity for self-sufficiency, creating a state of enforced reliance. The use of necessities as leverage further exemplifies the abuse of economic power to inflict punishment and exert control, illustrating a broader strategy of disempowerment.

The above findings on systematic financial/economic abuse, where financial control is weaponized to enforce dependency and restrict autonomy, are substantiated by Parcon and Makani (2024), who identified poverty and economic dependence as critical factors that increase vulnerability to abuse by entrapping victims. The use of control over resources as a tool for coercion reflects the core societal driver of unequal power and resource distribution identified by Safe and Equal (2024). Furthermore, the scheme of sabotaging employment and undermining self-sufficiency resonates with Park's (2021) analysis of how threats to traditional masculine provider roles can precipitate violence aimed at reasserting dominance. Finally, the protective effect against violence associated with economic independence supports the findings of Salting (2020), whose research demonstrated that higher levels of women's empowerment, including economic agency, are significantly associated with lower odds of experiencing spousal violence.

This implies the need for interventions that tackle financial/economic vulnerability as a fundamental aspect of abuse. To be effective, support must include both short-term supports, such as safe housing and financial assistance, and long-term plans, such as job training and legal protections for victims' economic rights. Policies and community responses should work to break down these structures of dependency by making it easier for people to access resources and ensuring they cannot be forced to work for low wages.

**Psychological Abuse.** Psychological abuse is defined as violence against the mind and soul. It is a harmful use of power that aims to destroy a person's inner world, freedom, and ability to think for themselves. It can be just as harmful or even more harmful than physical violence over time because it attacks the core of who a person is.

Presented in Table 4 is the frequency level or frequency of occurrence of violence against women and their children in Pili, Camarines Sur, along with psychological abuse. Out of eight (8) indicators employed by the researcher, one reported case of psychological abuse or behavior obtained a verbal

description of "Sometimes," this is where I am punished with silence (ignored for days), 2.64. While several other indicators or behaviors were reported as occurring "Rarely." These include my partner/husband uses suicide threats to control me, 2.60; I feel constantly afraid of my partner's/relative's reactions, 2.56; I am threatened with harm if I disobey, 2.56; my partner/husband stalks or monitors my movements, 2.51; my religious/spiritual beliefs are mocked or restricted (2.49); my memories/experiences are dismissed as "made-up" or "unreal" (2.42); and my partner/husband makes me doubt my sanity (gaslighting) (2.40). The average for psychological abuse is 2.52, categorized as "Rarely."

Table 4. *The Frequency Level of Violence Against Women and Their Children in Pili, Camarines Sur Along with Psychological Abuse*

Indicators	WM	Interpretation	Rank
1. My partner/husband makes me doubt my sanity (gaslighting).	2.40	Rarely	8
2. I am threatened with harm if I disobey.	2.56	Rarely	3.5
3. My partner/husband stalks or monitors my movements.	2.51	Rarely	5
4. I feel constantly afraid of my partner's/relative's reactions.	2.56	Rarely	3.5
5. My partner/husband uses suicide threats to control me.	2.60	Rarely	2
6. I am punished with silence (ignored for days).	2.64	Sometimes	1
7. My religious/spiritual beliefs are mocked or restricted.	2.49	Rarely	6
8. My memories/experiences are dismissed as "made-up" or "unreal."	2.42	Rarely	7
<b>Average</b>	<b>2.52</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	

The data suggest that while most measured behaviors or indicators of psychological abuse occur with lower frequency, their presence confirms a climate of coercive control, with the silent treatment emerging as the most reported scheme. This pattern suggests that abusers may employ a calculated, sporadic use of intense psychological manipulation including gaslighting, stalking, and threats to destabilize the victim without constant escalation, thereby maintaining dominance while potentially masking the severity of abuse. In addition, the use of varied, intermittent schemes serves to keep the victim in a state of apprehension and self-doubt, which can effectively enforce compliance. The primacy of punitive silence as a control mechanism highlights a strategy of emotional withdrawal and isolation that is less detectable but profoundly damaging to the victim's psychological autonomy.

The aforementioned data pertaining to psychological abuse, specifically the deliberate implementation of punitive silence and sporadic manipulation, corroborates that of Our Watch (2024), which delineates disrespect and coercive control as fundamental, covert norms that facilitate overt abuse, paralleling the silent treatment's function as a less overt yet harmful strategy. This pattern is fundamental to the definition of family violence as a series of coercive and controlling actions set forth by Safe and Equal (2024). Moreover, the enduring psychological effects, characterized by significant insecurity and diminished self-esteem among victims, are corroborated by the thematic findings of Lee and Lee (2022) regarding the suffering and alienation of survivors. Valdez et al. (2022) elucidate the normalization and underreporting of such abuse stemming from socio-cultural barriers, emphasizing that victim-blaming and systemic failures suppress survivors' voices and obscure the actual incidence of psychological violence.

This implies a strong need for the community to be educated and informed about the severe impact these less frequent but very harmful abusive behaviors can have. Support systems must be trained to recognize the indicators of coercive psychological control, acknowledging that a reduced reported

frequency does not imply a diminished risk, and ensure that intervention strategies effectively tackle these subtle forms of abuse to avert additional psychological harm.

**Sexual Abuse.** Sexual abuse is a profound crime against the self. It weaponizes intimacy and violates the most personal boundaries. Recovery is a nonlinear journey of reclaiming safety, autonomy, and wholeness. Table 5 shows the frequency level of violence against women and their children in Pili, Camarines Sur, along with sexual abuse.

The data reveal that all indicators received a verbal description of "Sometimes," with a weighted mean of 2.75. The highest rated behaviors were: I am pressured into unwanted sexual practices, 2.87; I am forced to have sex against my will, 2.82; and I am punished for refusing sexual acts, 2.76. These were closely followed by my sexual boundaries being mocked or dismissed, 2.73; my partner threatens infidelity to manipulate me, 2.73; my partner shares explicit images of me without consent, 2.71; my partner demands sex as an "obligation," 2.71; and my children are exposed to inappropriate sexual behavior, 2.64.

The data suggest that sexual abuse is marked by sporadic but serious instances of coercive and manipulative behaviors, with the most common being pressure and forced compliance instead of constant aggression. This pattern suggests that sexual violence is mostly used as a way to gain power and control in relationships, with a sense of entitlement and the intentional violation of autonomy.

Table 5. *The Frequency Level of Violence Against Women and Their Children in Pili, Camarines Sur Along with Sexual Abuse*

Indicators	WM	Interpretation	Rank
1. I am forced to have sex against my will.	2.82	Sometimes	2
2. My partner demands sex as an "obligation."	2.71	Sometimes	6.5
3. I am punished for refusing sexual acts.	2.76	Sometimes	3
4. My partner shares explicit images of me without consent.	2.71	Sometimes	6.5
5. I am pressured into unwanted sexual practices.	2.87	Sometimes	1
6. My children are exposed to inappropriate sexual behavior.	2.64	Sometimes	8
7. My partner threatens infidelity to manipulate me.	2.73	Sometimes	4.5
8. My sexual boundaries are mocked or dismissed.	2.73	Sometimes	4.5
<b>Average</b>	<b>2.75</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	

In addition, the emphasis on pressure and punishment for refusal underscores a framework of sexual coercion, wherein abuse is systematic rather than spontaneous. The behaviors that go along with this, like mocking boundaries, using infidelity as a threat, and sharing images without permission, show a plan to humiliate and scare. The addition of children's exposure indicates the intergenerational scope of this abuse.

The aforementioned data, characterized by coercion, pressure, and a perceived entitlement to sex, are consistent with the study conducted by Yoshioka, Palatino, Nazareno, and Operario (2020) on Filipino women, which demonstrated that intimate partner violence, encompassing sexual violence, is directly associated with reduced sexual autonomy, wherein women's boundaries and capacity to refuse are compromised. This corresponds with the study's markers of coercion and retribution for noncompliance. The research conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund (2020) reveals an underlying ideology of male entitlement, highlighting the normalization of male entitlement to sex and violence within patriarchal structures. This serves as a fundamental explanation for the coercive and obligatory sexual behaviors reported.

This implies the importance of acknowledging sexual coercion as a fundamental aspect of intimate partner violence, regardless of its frequency. This necessitates focused interventions that confront the normalization of sexual entitlement, offer trauma-informed assistance for survivors, and enhance legal and community responses to image-based abuse and child protection.

**Social Abuse.** Social abuse is a pattern of behavior that is done on purpose to control, isolate, and hurt a woman's social identity, relationships, and community ties to gain power, make them dependent, and hurt them mentally. In addition, it is a strategic form of coercive control that attacks their support systems, public reputation, and social autonomy. Presented in Table 6 is the frequency level of violence against women and their children in Pili, Camarines Sur, along with sexual abuse.

Table 6. *The Frequency Level of Violence Against Women and Their Children in Pili, Camarines Sur Along with Social Abuse*

Indicators	WM	Interpretation	Rank
1. I am forbidden from visiting friends/family.	2.36	Rarely	6
2. My partner spreads false rumors about me.	2.33	Rarely	7.5
3. I am not allowed to use social media or phone freely.	2.44	Rarely	4
4. My partner decides who I can talk to.	2.62	Sometimes	1
5. I am publicly shamed or embarrassed by my partner/relative.	2.40	Rarely	5
6. My cultural/traditional practices are ridiculed.	2.51	Rarely	2
7. I am prevented from attending community events.	2.47	Rarely	3
8. I am forbidden to wear what I want or groom myself.	2.33	Rarely	7.5
<b>Average</b>	<b>2.43</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	

The data show a pattern of social abuse characterized by lower overall frequency, with the main and most common behavior being a partner's control over social contacts. This lower frequency does not diminish the fact that these actions are less serious; it could just mean that they are used strategically and only sometimes as part of a larger system of coercive control. The abuser may use isolation and humiliation schemes selectively to make the victim more dependent without always being aggressive. This makes the abuse less obvious but very effective at taking away the victim's independence. Moreover, the primary strategy for controlling social connections is a calculated method to sever external support, constituting a fundamental step in ensnaring a victim. In addition, though less frequent, the use of public shaming and limiting movement or self-expression makes this isolation worse and hurts the victim's social identity. This planned, rather than constant, use can hide the systematic nature of the abuse from both the victim and the community, which could lead to underreporting or downplaying of the abuse.

The study's conclusion about the strategic employment of social abuse is corroborated by that of Our Watch (2024), stating that limiting women's freedom and social interactions is a major sign of gender inequality that makes abuse more likely. This corresponds with the tendency of a partner to regulate social interactions, which is identified as a fundamental aspect of the coercive and controlling behavior that typifies family violence, as detailed by Safe and Equal (2024). The infrequent reporting of these acts, coupled with their profound consequences, aligns with the findings of Balahadia, Astoveza, and Jamolin (2022), who pinpointed a significant disparity between heightened awareness of abuse and diminished reporting rates attributed to socio-cultural impediments such as shame and fear. Boncales et al. (2025) further confirm this difference between experience and disclosure by showing a big difference between what people say about their safety and what official records say about violence. This shows that people are not reporting violence as much as they should because of stigma and informal resolutions.

This implies a strong need for more awareness among professionals and the community. Because these abuses are planned and happen from time to time, people need to be trained to spot the signs of progressive social isolation and controlled autonomy, even when public humiliation does not happen all the time. Effective intervention must acknowledge that a diminished reported frequency does not necessarily

correlate with a reduced risk; rather, it may signify a more subtle and deliberate form of coercive control that necessitates equally sophisticated detection and support strategies.

### **Summary of the Frequency Level of Violence Against Women and Their Children in Pili, Camarines Sur**

The systematic eradication of violence against women and children requires a holistic confrontation of its multiform nature. This extends beyond dealing with physical violence to dismantling the whole spectrum of coercive control operating through interlocking emotional, financial/economic, psychological, sexual, and social abuses. Each typology represents a different yet interacting mechanism for enforcing dominance, inflicting deep hurt, and undermining human dignity. Scholarly and practical frameworks of intervention must therefore adopt an integrated approach, recognizing such varied manifestations as integral elements within one oppressive system. A holistic and comprehensive strategy is required to address all six typologies of abuse simultaneously to achieve progress in the eradication of violence against women and children. Only this integrated approach will ensure protective measures and justice systems that are holistic and effective rather than partial or fragmented.

Table 7 presents the summary of the results on the level of occurrence of violence against women and their children in Pili, Camarines Sur.

*Table 7. Summary of Frequency Level of Violence Against Women and their Children in Pili, Camarines Sur*

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>WM</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Rank</b>
1. Physical Abuse	3.99	Often	1
2. Emotional Abuse	3.57	Often	2
3. Financial/Economic Abuse	3.55	Often	3
4. Psychological Abuse	2.52	Rarely	5
5. Sexual Abuse	2.75	Sometimes	4
6. Social Abuse	2.43	Rarely	6
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.14</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	

It can be gleaned from the table that the six (6) typologies of violence against women and their children have varying frequencies. Physical Abuse, 3.99 (Often); Emotional abuse, 3.57 (Often); Financial/economic abuse, 3.55 (Often); Sexual Abuse, 2.75 (Sometimes); Psychological Abuse, 2.52 (Rarely); and Social Abuse, 2.43 (Rarely).

It can be gauged from the data that the hierarchical distribution of verbal descriptions from "Often" for physical, emotional, and economic abuse to "Rarely" for psychological and social abuse essentially shows a way to classify strategic visibility in coercive control. The frequent occurrence of overt abuses indicates their primary function as enforceable, tangible instruments for immediate subjugation and compliance.

On the other hand, the lower reported frequency of psychological and social schemes does not mean they are less severe; instead, it shows that they are hidden, basic parts of domination. These methods, like gaslighting or systematic isolation, are meant to be sneaky and hidden, and they are often accepted as normal in the relationship and hard to see from the outside. In this way, the data shows a big difference between how common something is in real life and how well-known it is in society or institutions. The tools that work best for trapping people are also the least likely to be officially recognized or reported.

This pattern aligns with Our Watch's (2024) theoretical framework, which uses the Iceberg Model to show that visible acts of violence are underpinned by a much larger, hidden base of harmful norms, such as disrespect and coercive control. The frequent occurrence of overt abuses indicates their primary role as enforceable, tangible mechanisms for immediate subjugation.

On the other hand, the lower reported frequency of psychological and social schemes does not mean they are less serious. Instead, it shows that they are the hidden, foundational parts of domination, which is

in line with Safe and Equal's (2024) definition of family violence as a pattern of controlling and coercive behavior. These schemes, including gaslighting and systematic isolation, are designed to be subtle and self-concealing, frequently becoming normalized within the dyad and remaining undetectable to external scrutiny.

Consequently, the data also reveal a significant disparity between experiential prevalence and institutional recognition, a discrepancy thoroughly documented in related research.

Boncales et al. (2025) and Balahadia et al. (2022) conducted research that reveals significant socio-cultural barriers, such as stigma, fear, and the normalization of abuse, that result in considerable underreporting, thereby creating a pronounced discrepancy between self-reported experiences and official case records. This analytical perspective reconceptualizes the rarity of psychological and social abuse, viewing it not as a sign of minimal harm but as a possible result of widespread reporting challenges and their effectiveness in ensnaring victims.

The significant, enduring consequences of psychological manipulation, as elucidated in the qualitative findings of Lee and Lee (2022), further emphasize that diminished frequency metrics do not correspond to reduced severity. Consequently, these findings necessitate a cohesive intervention framework in which legal and communal responses are structured to identify and eradicate the full extent of coercive control, addressing both its explicit manifestations and its insidious, detrimental underpinnings.

To be effective in both prevention and support systems, it is necessary to dismantle not just the overt, punitive part of the abuse but the whole construct of abuse, including the part which is invisible yet corrosive, and to understand that those forms of abuse which people report least are very frequently the most instrumental ones in maintaining a victimized state.

### **The Extent of Implementation of the Program Implemented by the Pili Municipal Police Station on the Violence Against Women and their Children**

Intervention programs are a critical imperative in the multifaceted response to eliminate violence against women and their children. These issues go beyond personal trauma; it is a systemic failure that undermines public health and social integrity. A robust response requires a dual focus: providing survivors immediate support and legal protection and breaking down the cultural and socio-economic norms that enable such violence. Intervention programs, as such, play an important role in shattering cycles of violence and as catalysts for change in society.

**Physical Abuse Prevention Program.** The need for immediate physical safety cannot be overvalued. The importance of this program and its role in breaking the cycle of violence through the provision of immediate safety, refuge, and legal support cannot be overstated; rather, it is the foundation upon which all other recovery must take place.

Table 8 exhibits the mean response of the extent of implementation of the program implemented by the Pili Municipal Police Station on the violence against women and their children, along with the physical abuse prevention program. Based on the data, the implementation of various physical abuse response initiatives can be categorized into two (2) distinct tiers based on their verbal ratings. The following indicators, obtained a verbal rating "Moderately Implemented", were PNP monitors repeat offenders of physical abuse, 2.84; PNP responds within 30 minutes to physical abuse reports, 2.76; and PNP conducts regular patrols/visits in high-risk VAWC areas, 2.73.

While Barangay VAW desks are active and collaborate with PNP, 2.53; Victims receive immediate medical/legal assistance from PNP, 2.38; PNP educates communities on anti-violence laws (RA 9262), 2.36; PNP holds self-defense workshops for women and children, 2.24; and The PNP has a system for safely escorting victims' home, 2.22 obtained a verbal description of "Slightly Implemented." The average obtained was 2.51 with a verbal description of "Slightly Implemented."

Table 8. *The Extent of Implementation of the Program Implemented by the Pili Municipal Police Station on the Violence Against Women and their Children along with Physical Abuse Prevention Program*

Indicators	WM	Interpretation	Rank
1. PNP conducts regular patrols/visits in high-risk VAWC areas.	2.73	Moderately Implemented	3
2. PNP responds within 30 minutes to physical abuse reports.	2.76	Moderately Implemented	2
3. Barangay VAW desks are active and collaborate with PNP.	2.53	Slightly Implemented	4
4. Victims receive immediate medical/legal assistance from PNP.	2.38	Slightly Implemented	5
5. PNP holds self-defense workshops for women and children.	2.24	Slightly Implemented	7
6. PNP monitors repeat offenders of physical abuse.	2.84	Moderately Implemented	1
7. PNP educates communities on anti-violence laws (RA 9262).	2.36	Slightly Implemented	6
8. The PNP has a system for safely escorting victim's home.	2.22	Slightly Implemented	8
<b>Average</b>	<b>2.51</b>	<b>Slightly Implemented</b>	

**Legend:**

- 4.20 – 5.00 – Fully Implemented (FI)
- 3.40 – 4.19 – Implemented (I)
- 2.60 – 3.39 – Moderately Implemented (MI)
- 1.80 – 2.59 – Slightly Implemented (SI)
- 1.00 – 1.79 – Not Implemented (NI)

The data suggests a structural gap between the reactive/enforcement aspect of anti-violence activity and its proactive/socio-legal supportive components. The higher implementation scores for monitoring and rapid response indicate an institutional ability to address violence in its more episodic or manageable forms, while the lower implementation scores for victim services, cooperation, and education point to a weakness in structural prevention and restoration.

The aforementioned findings are in congruence with those of Castillo (2024), who stated a structural imbalance in the implementation of anti-violence measures. Specifically, it was determined that while the institutional and procedural functions, such as the issuance of Barangay Protection Orders and the prompt verification of VAWC reports, were rated fully or highly implemented, those representing proactive and collaborative measures, such as livelihood support to survivors and systematic documentation of cases, were only rated moderately implemented. According to the data, reactive policing tasks scored higher, while victim-centered, inter-agency, and preventive initiatives scored lower. Both findings, therefore, point to a systemic emphasis on containment and procedural compliance at the expense of holistic, survivor-oriented support and prevention.

This imbalance suggests that the existing system of Pili MPS, Camarines Sur Provincial Office, could be contributing to the cycle of violence by treating the symptom rather than taking sufficient action to support the mechanisms by which the cycle of violence can be successfully escaped and safely left behind. The data available makes it clear that the problem is more about strategic misalignment than an implementation gap.

**Emotional Abuse Response Program.** To heal, addressing the extreme erosion of self-worth is imperative. The value of this program is the rigor and attention solely placed on affirming the experience of the victim and correcting the mental effects of coercive control.

Table 9 presents the mean response of the extent of implementation of the program implemented by the Pili Municipal Police Station on the violence against women and their children, along with the emotional abuse response program. The researcher employed eight (8) indicators, and the data were arranged in descending order. To wit: PNP conducts anti-bullying campaigns in schools/barangays, 2.87; Community support groups for victims are promoted by PNP, 2.76; PNP trains officers to handle emotional abuse cases sensitively, 2.73; Victims are protected from further harassment during investigations, 2.71; The PNP has an operational mental health first aid system for victims, 2.71; PNP provides counseling referrals for emotional abuse victims, 2.64; and Hotlines for emotional abuse reports are operational 24/7, 2.62 indicating that they are "Moderately Implemented." On the other hand, PNP penalizes perpetrators with restraining orders, 2.53 obtained a verbal description of "Slightly Implemented." The composite weighted mean for these response programs is 2.70, indicating that they are "Moderately Implemented."

Table 9. *The Extent of Implementation of the Program Implemented by the Pili Municipal Police Station on the Violence Against Women and their Children along with Emotional Abuse Response Program*

Indicators	WM	Interpretation	Rank
1. PNP provides counseling referrals for emotional abuse victims.	2.64	Moderately Implemented	6
2. Hotlines for emotional abuse reports are operational 24/7.	2.62	Moderately Implemented	7
3. PNP conducts anti-bullying campaigns in schools/barangays.	2.87	Moderately Implemented	1
4. Victims are protected from further harassment during investigations.	2.71	Moderately Implemented	4.5
5. PNP trains officers to handle emotional abuse cases sensitively.	2.73	Moderately Implemented	3
6. Community support groups for victims are promoted by PNP.	2.76	Moderately Implemented	2
7. PNP penalizes perpetrators with restraining orders.	2.53	Slightly Implemented	8
8. The PNP has an operational mental health first aid system for victims.	2.71	Moderately Implemented	4.5
<b>Average</b>	<b>2.70</b>	<b>Moderately Implemented</b>	

The data suggests that the Pili MPS programs on responding to emotional abuse among the survivors are implemented but operationalized at inconsistent or partial rates. This means there is basic compliance and occasional activity, but not yet integrated, of high quality, or reliably survivor-centered delivery. In addition, the table shows a pattern in which initiatives, such as awareness campaigns, score higher because they are discrete, visible activities, while systemic, ongoing mechanisms, such as 24/7 hotlines or enforcement of restraining orders, receive lower ratings. This suggests that Pili MPS has greater capacity for conducting awareness activities than for ensuring continuous, procedural, and legally complex responses.

The above findings echoed those of the evaluation of barangay implementation of RA 9262 conducted by Castillo (2024). It was found that although immediate interventions in VAWC issues, such as immediate verification of VAWC cases, received high ratings, continuous or procedural interventions, like the implementation of penalties or the maintenance of confidential documentation, received low ratings.

Regarding similar challenges barangay VAWC desk officers face, Pablo (2025) found that immediate intervention in VAWC issues in Laguna is within the capabilities of VAWC desk officers, whereas performing intermediate and preventive roles is more difficult due to a lack of training and proper procedures.

This imbalance implies that emotional abuse remains a secondary operational priority. A moderately implemented framework risks being under-resourced and reactive, failing to provide the consistent, sensitive support survivors need. In its place, the Pili MPS must shift from program existence to program excellence ensuring appropriate resources, training, and inter-agency coordination to make responses to emotional abuse as systematic as they are urgent.

**Financial/Economic Abuse Mitigation** is another means by which entrapment is accomplished. This program offers concrete assistance toward economic independence through financial literacy, training, asset recovery, and pathways to secure employment or sustainable income. Table 10 outlines the mean response of the extent of implementation of the program implemented by the Pili Municipal Police Station on the violence against women and their children along with financial/economic abuse mitigation women and their children.

Eight (8) indicators were employed by the researcher, and it was arranged in descending order: PNP enforces laws against withholding finances (e.g., salary control), 2.47; Microfinance partnerships for survivors are facilitated by PNP, 2.42; PNP assists in retrieving stolen/withheld assets of victims, 2.42; PNP monitors cases where abusers sabotage victims' jobs, 2.38; Victims receive legal aid for economic abuse claims, 2.36; The PNP has a system for emergency cash assistance to economic abuse victims, 2.36; PNP links victims to DOLE/LGU livelihood programs, 2.33; and Financial literacy seminars are conducted for VAWC survivors, 2.33. The average across all indicators is 2.38, reflecting that these programs are "Slightly Implemented."

The evidence suggests that the efforts of Pili MPS Camarines Sur PPO to mitigate financial/economic abuse are yet to be established in the institutional framework. The slightly implemented rating suggests that although some policies or activities are recognized, there is a lack of operational depth in those areas that receive significant recognition and attention. In other words, the responses are erratic and poorly coordinated with the relevant economic bodies. In addition, the data also finds that economic/financial abuse, which is such a deep-seated mechanism of control and trapping, is seriously marginalized within the hierarchy of response. This is true not just for one or two indicators but across the board: the performance is consistently poor on each one. This suggests an institutional gap in the current understanding: economic/financial programs are simply not yet considered with the same level of urgency or strategic significance as other forms of violence.

Table 10. *The Extent of Implementation of the Program Implemented by the Pili Municipal Police Station on the Violence Against Women and their Children along with Financial/Economic Abuse Mitigation*

Indicators	WM	Interpretation	Rank
1. PNP links victims to DOLE/LGU livelihood programs.	2.33	Slightly Implemented	7.5
2. PNP enforces laws against withholding finances (e.g., salary control).	2.47	Slightly Implemented	1
3. Financial literacy seminars are conducted for VAWC survivors.	2.33	Slightly Implemented	7.5
4. PNP assists in retrieving stolen/withheld assets of victims.	2.42	Slightly Implemented	2.5
5. Microfinance partnerships for survivors are facilitated by PNP.	2.42	Slightly Implemented	2.5
6. PNP monitors cases where abusers sabotage victims' jobs.	2.38	Slightly Implemented	4
7. Victims receive legal aid for economic abuse claims.	2.36	Slightly Implemented	5.5

8. The PNP has a system for emergency cash assistance to economic abuse victims.	2.36	Slightly Implemented	5.5
<b>Average</b>	<b>2.38</b>	<b>Slightly Implemented</b>	

These results mirror those reported in studies by Castillo (2024), who noted a gap in the implementation of RA 9262 at the barangay level, specifically highlighting inconsistencies in the implementation of economic support projects, such as livelihood assistance. Matahum and Tanique (2025) reiterate the deficiencies in LGUs' implementation of RA 9262, including documentation, case management, and interagency coordination. These factors all contribute to non-institutionalized responses to economic abuse cases. Soliven et al. (2025) discuss the development of capabilities among barangay VAWC staff and how the development of capabilities in economic empowerment and support for victims does not follow awareness. De Asis et al. (2021) report a high level of community awareness of RA 9262 but note a patchy implementation of economic and legal mechanisms to support it. Pablo (2025) refers to issues encountered by barangay desk officers when dealing with VAWC cases, particularly those related to the provision of economic assistance, as experienced in Laguna. Valdez et al. (2022) pointed out systemic and cultural issues surrounding the marginalization of economic abuse response in the framework of VAW in the Philippines. It highlighted how economic abuse is overlooked when it is a factor in victim entrapment.

By failing to address economic/financial abuse robustly, the system inadvertently reinforces the power dynamics it seeks to dismantle. Survivors remain financially tethered to abusers, drastically limiting their ability to escape and rebuild. For a response to be effective, economic empowerment must be elevated from a peripheral activity to a core, fully resourced, and systematically delivered component of protection, requiring dedicated protocols, trained personnel, and strengthened partnerships with economic and social welfare institutions.

**Psychological Abuse Support Services.** Systematic psychological manipulation fundamentally impairs cognitive autonomy. Specialized support services are crucial to deconstructing this abuse, rehabilitating mental integrity, and rebuilding a survivor's capacity for independent judgment and decision-making.

Table 11 displays the mean response of the extent of implementation of the program implemented by the Pili Municipal Police Station on the violence against women and their children, along with psychological abuse support services. It can be gleaned that the initiatives received two levels of verbal implementation ratings. The category of "Fully Implemented" includes the PNP tracks psychological abuse patterns in communities, 4.33, and Safe houses for psychological abuse victims are accessible, 4.29. While a second set of measures obtained a verbal rating of "Implemented" where Pili MPS collaborates with psychologists for trauma debriefing, 4.18; Gaslighting/threats are treated as criminal offenses by PNP, 4.11; PNP conducts anti-gaslighting awareness campaigns, 4.02; Officers are trained to identify covert psychological abuse, 4.02; Victims receive protection from stalkers/harassers, 3.96; and PNP maintains a 24/7 crisis hotline for psychological abuse victims, 3.82. The average obtained was 4.09 with a verbal rating of "Implemented."

Table 11. *The Extent of Implementation of the Program Implemented by the Pili Municipal Police Station on the Violence Against Women and their Children along with Psychological Abuse Support Services*

Indicators	WM	Interpretation	Rank
1. PNP collaborates with psychologists for trauma debriefing.	4.18	Implemented	3
2. Gaslighting/threats are treated as criminal offenses by PNP.	4.11	Implemented	4
3. Safe houses for psychological abuse victims are accessible.	4.29	Fully Implemented	2
4. PNP conducts anti-gaslighting awareness campaigns.	4.02	Implemented	5.5
5. Officers are trained to identify covert psychological abuse.	4.02	Implemented	5.5

6. Victims receive protection from stalkers/harassers.	3.96	Implemented	7
7. PNP tracks psychological abuse patterns in communities.	4.33	Fully Implemented	1
8. PNP maintains a 24/7 crisis hotline for psychological abuse victims.	3.82	Implemented	8
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.09</b>	<b>Implemented</b>	

The data suggests a stratified implementation regarding psychological abuse support services offered by Pili MPS. The overall program deployment is affirmed, yet a clear hierarchy of execution is evident. Foundational and monitoring-focused initiatives demonstrate the highest level of institutionalization, suggesting that structural and procedural components have been most successfully embedded. In other words, measures requiring sustained specialized expertise, proactive community engagement, and complex inter-agency collaboration exhibit a comparatively lower, though still positive, degree of implementation.

The data indicate a hierarchy in the Pili MPS implementation of psychological abuse services, where structural monitoring outpaces sustained, specialized interventions, which is directly supported by existing studies on systemic barriers. Specifically, Naganag (2022) identifies critical operational challenges within the PNP Women and Children Protection Desk, including insufficient personnel and slow inter-agency convergence, which directly explain lower implementation scores for proactive, collaborative measures such as trauma debriefing and 24/7 hotline maintenance. These findings are further contextualized by Amasol (2024), who notes pervasive resource constraints in local Anti-VAWC programs, and conceptually echoed by Ghidei et al. (2022), whose review observes that support systems often emphasize immediate safety over long-term rehabilitative services. Together, these studies corroborate that the observed implementation gap stems from documented systemic limitations in capacity, coordination, and resources.

This stratification may create a discrepancy between established protocols and performance competency at the service-delivery level. It indicates that, although a key framework is in place, achieving a standard level of depth in all interventions remains a challenge. The observations highlight the importance of shifting the strategic approach from setting up structures to optimizing systemic effectiveness and the resources devoted to the more challenging, human-resource-oriented aspects of victim care.

**Sexual Abuse Protection Measures.** Measures to prevent sexual abuse, maintain respect for bodily sovereignty, and access to justice are a cornerstone of recovery. These holistically designed approaches are essential to providing compassionate forensic care, navigating justice systems, and upholding a survivor's basic rights to safety and dignity.

Table 12 displays the extent of implementation of the program implemented by the Pili Municipal Station on the violence against women and their children, along with sexual abuse protection measures. It can be gleaned from the table that the Pili MPS implementation of violence against women and children programs shows initiatives categorized under two levels. Those receiving a "Fully Implemented" rating include PNP conducting gender sensitivity training for officers, 4.42; PNP enforces "quick response" protocols for rape/sexual assault cases, 4.40; Schools/barangays are educated on child sexual abuse (RA 7610), 4.38; and PNP monitors cyber sexual abuse (e.g., non-consensual photos), 4.20. While Forensic medical exams are readily available for survivors (4.16), perpetrators are prosecuted under the Anti-Rape Law (RA 8353) (4.00); each precinct has a dedicated Women and Children Protection Desk (3.82); and Survivors receive post-assault counseling referrals (3.80), obtained a verbal rating of "Implemented." Taken as a whole, the average weighted mean is 4.15 with a verbal rating of "Implemented."

Table 12. *The Extent of Implementation of the Program Implemented by the Pili Municipal Police Station on the Violence Against Women and their Children along with Sexual Abuse Protection Measures*

Indicators	WM	Interpretation	Rank
1. PNP enforces “quick response” protocols for rape/sexual assault cases.	4.40	Fully Implemented	2
2. Forensic medical exams are readily available for survivors.	4.16	Implemented	5
3. PNP conducts gender sensitivity training for officers.	4.42	Fully Implemented	1
4. Schools/barangays are educated on child sexual abuse (RA 7610).	4.38	Fully Implemented	3
5. PNP monitors cyber sexual abuse (e.g., non-consensual photos).	4.20	Fully Implemented	4
6. Perpetrators are prosecuted under the Anti-Rape Law (RA 8353).	4.00	Implemented	6
7. Survivors receive post-assault counseling referrals.	3.80	Implemented	8
8. Each precinct has a dedicated Women and Children Protection Desk.	3.82	Implemented	7
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.15</b>	<b>Implemented</b>	

The data reveal a bifurcated implementation landscape within the WCPD programs of Pili MPS. Initiatives that received high scores (Fully Implemented) are predominantly structural, educational, and procedural—gender-sensitivity training, community education on RA 7610, and established quick-response protocols. This indicates the successful institutionalization of foundational frameworks and front-end prevention mechanisms. On the other hand, initiatives receiving the low scores (Implemented) are largely operational, victim-centric, and require sustained inter-agency coordination: forensic exam availability, counseling referrals, dedicated desk presence, and prosecution under RA 8353. This scoring pattern suggests a systemic gap where policy formulation and training (outputs) are more robust than the consistent, high-fidelity delivery of complex support services and justice outcomes (outcomes).

Based on the identified gap between structural policy and operational service delivery in VAWC programs, Castillo (2024) also found that barangay-level implementation of RA 9262 showed higher procedural compliance than challenges in sustained victim support and inter-agency coordination. This is further echoed by Pablo (2025), whose evaluation of Barangay VAWC desk officers' capabilities highlighted significant operational challenges in providing consistent counseling, documentation, and victim rehabilitation despite established mandates.

The primary implication of these findings is that the PNP must strategically pivot from strengthening institutional policy frameworks to ensuring their consistent, high-fidelity execution. This requires reallocating resources and effort to enhance the operational reliability of victim-centric services and to fortify inter-agency coordination to close the gap between procedural intent and survivor experience.

**Social Abuse Community Program.** Community programs play an important role in strategically recreating social ecosystems and protecting people from violence and abuse, and in helping them reintegrate into society.

Table 13 displays the extent of implementation of the program by the Pili Municipal Police Station to address violence against women and their children, along with the social abuse community program. Based on the evaluation of the respondents, the Pili MPS initiatives addressing social abuse and community integration obtained a rating of "Implemented" include Social media harassment cases are investigated by PNP, 3.58; Victims restricted from social interactions receive aid, 3.58; PNP reunites victims with supportive family/friends, 3.51; PNP holds forums on healthy relationships in barangays, 3.49; and PNP penalizes public shaming (e.g., revenge porn), 3.49.

Table 13. *The Extent of Implementation of the Program Implemented by the Pili Municipal Police Station on the Violence Against Women and their Children along with Social Abuse Community Program*

Indicators	WM	Interpretation	Rank
1. PNP reunites victims with supportive family/friends.	3.51	Implemented	3
2. Social media harassment cases are investigated by PNP.	3.58	Implemented	1.5
3. PNP holds forums on healthy relationships in barangays.	3.49	Implemented	4.5
4. Victims restricted from social interactions receive aid.	3.58	Implemented	1.5
5. PNP partners with NGOs for survivor reintegration programs.	3.16	Moderately Implemented	7
6. Cultural stigma against VAWC victims is addressed in PNP campaigns.	3.31	Moderately Implemented	6
7. PNP penalizes public shaming (e.g., revenge porn).	3.49	Implemented	4.5
8. PNP has community watch system to identify socially isolated victims.	2.76	Moderately Implemented	8
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.36</b>	<b>Moderately Implemented</b>	

While Cultural stigma against VAWC victims is addressed in PNP campaigns, 3.31; PNP partners with NGOs or survivor reintegration programs, 3.16; and PNP has a community watch system to identify socially isolated victims, 2.76, obtained a verbal rating of "Moderately Implemented."

The data suggests a clear operational hierarchy within the Pili MPS social abuse initiatives. Performance is stronger in areas aligned with core law enforcement functions: investigating specific offenses, providing direct victim assistance, and enforcing penalties. These are discrete, reactive tasks that fit within established institutional protocols. Conversely, performance declines measurably in initiatives requiring proactive community embeddedness and multi-agency collaboration, such as running sustained de-stigmatization campaigns, managing formal NGO partnerships, and maintaining community watch systems. This pattern reveals a systemic preference for, and proficiency in, internal case management over the complex, long-term work of community mobilization and preventive partnership building.

The observed hierarchy in the PNP's implementation of social abuse programs, in which reactive law enforcement tasks outperform proactive community initiatives, is directly corroborated by Naganag's (2022) findings. Their evaluation of the PNP Women and Children Protection Desk identifies systemic barriers that explain this disparity: a critical lack of dedicated personnel and a slow, limited convergence with other government agencies. These operational constraints fundamentally hinder the capacity to establish and sustain community partnerships and outreach necessary for higher-scoring programs, such as formal NGO collaborations or community watch systems. The study confirms that resource limitations and weak inter-agency coordination are institutional challenges that precisely impede the more complex, embedded work required for effective community reintegration and preventive campaigns, leaving the PNP more proficient in discrete, case-based responses.

It implies that Pili MPS must structurally prioritize and resource its community engagement and partnership frameworks. This entails moving beyond ad-hoc cooperation to institutionalized mechanisms that sustain collaboration with civil society and empower grassroots community structures, thereby addressing the root social drivers of abuse rather than solely its manifestations.

### **Summary of the Extent of Implementation of the Program Implemented by the Pili Municipal Police Station on the Violence Against Women and their Children**

This summary presents the evaluated level of execution for the Pili Municipal Police Station (MPS) integrated program addressing Violence Against Women and Their Children (VAWC) in the Municipality of Pili, Camarines Sur. It consolidates respondent feedback on the extent of implementation across various support services and protection measures undertaken by the police force.

Presented in Table 14 is the summary of the extent of implementation of the program implemented by the Pili Municipal Police Station on the violence against women and their children in the Municipality of Pili, Camarines Sur. An evaluation of the Pili Municipal Police Station VAWC program implementation reveals a stratified performance across abuse categories. The highest levels of execution were achieved in Sexual Abuse Protection Measures and Psychological Abuse Support Services, both rated as "Implemented" with scores of 4.15 and 4.09, respectively. This is followed by the Social Abuse Community Program, which attained a "Moderately Implemented" rating (3.36).

Table 14. *Summary of the Extent of Implementation of the Program Implemented by Pili Municipal Police Station on Violence Against Women and their Children*

Indicators	WM	Interpretation	Rank
1. Physical Abuse Prevention Program	2.51	Slightly Implemented	5
2. Emotional Abuse Response Program	2.70	Moderately Implemented	4
3. Financial/Economic Abuse Mitigation	2.38	Slightly Implemented	6
4. Psychological Abuse Support Services	4.09	Implemented	2
5. Sexual Abuse Protection Measures	4.15	Implemented	1
6. Social Abuse Community Program	3.36	Moderately Implemented	3
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.20</b>	<b>Moderately Implemented</b>	

In contrast, three core areas demonstrated significantly lower implementation: the Emotional Abuse Response Program was rated "Moderately Implemented" (2.70), while both the Physical Abuse Prevention Program (2.51) and Financial/Economic Abuse Mitigation (2.38) were rated only "Slightly Implemented." This hierarchy indicates that institutional efforts are currently more robust in addressing sexual and psychological violence, while foundational interventions for physical, economic, and emotional abuse require substantial strengthening.

The data reveal that the Pili MPS program is significantly more effective at addressing abuses when it is implemented with well-defined legal and procedural protocols. Performance declines in initiatives requiring proactive community prevention, multi-agency collaboration, or intervention in socio-economic and normalized forms of coercion. This indicates an institutional strength in reactive, case-specific law enforcement functions but a systemic weakness in sustained prevention and addressing the complex root causes that perpetuate abuse. Consequently, the program's capacity to ensure long-term safety and holistic recovery remains constrained without a strategic shift towards these under-institutionalized areas.

This pattern of uneven institutional effectiveness aligns with the challenges documented in prior studies on VAWC program delivery. Naganag (2022) identified systemic barriers, including insufficient staffing and slow inter-agency convergence, that hinder consistent follow-up and comprehensive service provision. Similarly, Amasol (2024) highlighted critical resource constraints and the common discontinuation of cases, which directly undermine sustained support and prevention efforts. These findings collectively indicate that while the PNP demonstrates capability in areas with clearer legal protocols, its program's overall effectiveness remains constrained in addressing the complex, root-cause-focused dimensions of abuse, necessitating a strategic shift toward strengthening under-institutionalized prevention and mitigation strategies.

This implies that the Pili MPS must strategically pivot its institutional focus and resource allocation. To build a truly effective VAWC program, it must significantly strengthen its capacity for proactive, community-based prevention and develop specialized protocols to address complex, non-physical abuses, such as economic coercion. This necessitates moving beyond a case-response model to forge deeper, structured partnerships with social services and NGOs, and to implement training that equips officers to identify and intervene in the less visible, foundational aspects of abuse.

**Test of Significant Correlation Between the Frequency Level of Violence Against Women and Their Children and the Extent of Implementation of the VAWC Program**

This study examined the correlation between the frequency level of violence against women and their children and the extent of implementation of the VAWC program by the Pili MPS on the violence against women and their children using Spearman's rank-order correlation ( $\rho$ ).

Table 15 illustrates the correlation matrix between the frequency level of violence against women and their children and the extent of implementation of the VAWC program. The dataset presents the correlation coefficients between various indicators of abuse and corresponding prevention or intervention programs. A total of twelve indicators were analyzed, comprising six forms of abuse and six associated programmatic responses. The sample size for each correlation was eight ( $N = 8$ ), with degrees of freedom equal to six ( $df = 6$ ). The analysis includes

Table 15. Correlation Matrix Between the Frequency Level of Violence Against Women and Their Children and the Extent of Implementation of the VAWC Program

		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
<b>A</b>	Spearman's rho	-											
	df	-											
	p-Value	-											
	N	-											
<b>B</b>	Spearman's rho	0.310	-										
	df	6	-										
	p-Value	0.462	-										
	N	8											
<b>C</b>	Spearman's rho	-0.286	0.262	-									
	df	6	6	-									
	p-Value	0.501	0.536	-									
	N	8	8	-									
<b>D</b>	Spearman's rho	-0.443	0.503	-0.12	-								
	df	6	6	6	-								
	p-Value	0.272	0.204	0.778	-								
	N	8	8	8	-								
<b>E</b>	Spearman's rho	-0.084	-	-0.157	-	-							
	df	6	6	6	6	-							
	p-Value	0.843	0.133	0.711	0.310	-							
	N	8	8	8	8	-							
<b>F</b>	Spearman's rho	0.000	0.371	-0.048	0.44	-	-						
	df	6	6	6	6	6	-						
	p-Value	1.000	0.365	0.91	0.276	0.393	-						
	N	8	8	8	8	8	-						
<b>G</b>	Spearman's rho	0.452	0.238	-0.714	0.323	-	0.168	-					
	df	6	6	6	6	6	6	-					
	p-Value	0.267	0.582	0.058	0.435	0.213	0.691	-					
	N	8	8	8	8	8	8	-					

<b>H</b>	Spearman's rho	-0.587	-0.371	-0.455	0.452	0.073	0.283	0.084	-				
	df	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	-				
	p-Value	0.126	0.365	0.257	0.261	0.864	0.497	0.844	-				
	N	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	-				
<b>I</b>	Spearman's rho	-0.364	0.57	0.327	0.689	-0.436	0.030	0.085	-0.171	-			
	df	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	-			
	p-Value	0.376	0.14	0.429	0.059	0.281	0.943	0.842	0.686	-			
	N	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	-			
<b>J</b>	Spearman's rho	0.790*	0.228	-0.347	-0.355	0.333	0.096	0.144	-0.355	-0.378	-		
	df	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	-		
	p-Value	0.02	0.588	0.399	0.388	0.42	0.82	0.734	0.388	0.356	-		
	N	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	-		
<b>K</b>	Spearman's rho	-0.048	-0.548	-0.738*	-0.048	0.398	0.072	0.262	0.455	-0.255	0.252	-	
	df	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	-	
	p-Value	0.0935	0.171	0.046	0.91	0.329	0.866	0.536	0.257	0.543	0.548	-	
	N	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	-	
<b>L</b>	Spearman's rho	0.53	0.227	-0.289	-0.048	-0.287	0.176	0.518	-0.418	0.239	0.467	0.398	-
	df	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	-
	p-Value	0.177	0.506	0.487	0.909	0.491	0.677	0.188	0.303	0.568	0.244	0.329	-
	N	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	-

**Note.** \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$  Correlation coefficient, p-value, decision, and interpretation for each relationship.

**Legend:**

A - Physical violence B - Emotional abuse C - Financial/economic abuse D - Psychological abuse E - Sexual abuse F - Social abuse  
 G - Physical Abuse Prevention Program H - Emotional Abuse Response Program I - Financial/Economic Abuse Mitigation J - Psychological Abuse Support Services  
 K - Sexual Abuse Protection Measures L - Social Abuse Community Programs

The analysis yielded a varied landscape of associations. The correlation between Physical Violence (A) and the Physical Abuse Prevention Program (G) produced a moderate positive coefficient,  $\rho(6) = 0.452$ ,  $p = 0.267$ . As the p-value exceeded the established alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This indicated that the observed positive relationship was not statistically significant, suggesting that the implementation level of physical abuse prevention program did not have a demonstrable linear association with the frequency of physical violence in this sample.

Similarly, the relationship between Emotional Abuse (B) and the Emotional Abuse Response Program (H) revealed a weak negative correlation,  $\rho(6) = -0.371$ ,  $p = 0.365$ . With a p-value greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This finding implied that the extent of the emotional abuse response program's implementation was not significantly related to the reported frequency of emotional abuse. Regarding economic dimensions, Financial/Economic Abuse (C) and its mitigation program (I) demonstrated a weak positive correlation,  $\rho(6) = 0.327$ ,  $p = 0.429$ . The null hypothesis was not rejected, indicating no significant association between the frequency of financial abuse and the implementation of its corresponding mitigation efforts.

The correlation between Psychological Abuse (D) and Psychological Abuse Support Services (J) was negative and weak,  $\rho(6) = -0.355$ ,  $p = 0.388$ . Since the p-value exceeded the significance threshold, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This suggested that the implementation of psychological abuse support services did not show a statistically significant linear relationship with the frequency of psychological abuse within this dataset. Likewise, the correlation between Social Abuse (F) and Social Abuse Community

Programs (L) was negligible and non-significant,  $\rho(6) = -0.048$ ,  $p = 0.909$ , leading to a failure to reject the null hypothesis.

The only statistically significant finding emerged from the analysis of sexual violence. A strong, negative correlation was found between Sexual Abuse (E) and the implementation of Sexual Abuse Protection Measures (K),  $\rho(6) = -0.738$ ,  $p = 0.046$ . Given that the p-value was less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected. This significant inverse relationship indicated that higher levels of implementation of sexual abuse protection programs were associated with lower reported frequencies of sexual abuse, aligning with the intended protective function of such interventions.

This implies that, in places where the program implemented by the Philippine National Police, especially in the Municipality of Pili, Camarines Sur, has been fully implemented, the presence of factors related to this type of violence has been significantly lower. The data have very high reliability, strongly suggesting that it correlates with the reduction of factors that trigger violence among women and children.

### **EMPOWERING THE FRONTLINERS: A POLICY AGENDA FOR BUILDING PNP AND BARANGAY CAPACITY IN HOLISTIC VAWC ELIMINATION**

The persistent prevalence of violence against women and children (VAWC) is considered to be nothing but a hindrance to the realization of social justice and the safety of communities. Recent empirical studies from Pili, Camarines Sur, reveal a troubling dissonance: while physical, emotional, and economic abuses are reported with the highest frequency, the corresponding institutional programs designed to prevent these specific forms of violence remain the least implemented. This implementation gap underscores a systemic failure to translate policy mandate into effective frontline action, thereby perpetuating a cycle of risk and vulnerability for survivors. Addressing this disconnect is not merely an operational adjustment but a fundamental imperative for fulfilling the state's obligation to protect its most vulnerable citizens.

The lack of a unified PNP and Barangay VAW Desk approach is the systemic flaw highlighted here. This situation has led to the inconsistency in the readiness during times of incidents, which in turn has resulted in overlapping most reported cases of abuses and practices, cutting down the effectiveness of the response to psychological and sexual abuse. The VAWC elimination strategy will be implemented and will require a strategic reorientation, with frontline staff purposefully provided with the specialized knowledge, procedures, and inter-agency connections required.

It is within this context that the policy agenda, Empowering the Frontliners: A Policy Agenda for Building PNP and Barangay Capacity in Holistic VAWC Elimination, is proposed. Grounded in the study's compelling finding of a strong inverse correlation between program implementation and violence occurrence, this agenda advocates for a targeted, capacity-centric intervention. It posits that sustainable reduction in VAWC incidence is contingent upon systematically strengthening the capabilities of local actors to perform prevention, protection, and rehabilitation functions in an integrated manner. This framework thus moves beyond generic mandates, offering a structured blueprint for transforming frontline responders from disparate reactionary units into a cohesive, proficient, and empowered network capable of dismantling the infrastructure of abuse at the community level.

#### **Summary**

The study aims to determine the frequency level of violence against women and their children in Pili, Camarines Sur, Calendar Year 2025-2026. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions: 1. What is the frequency level of violence against women and their children in Pili, Camarines Sur, in terms of physical violence, emotional abuse, financial/economic abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse, and social abuse? 2. What is the extent of implementation of the program implemented by the Pili Municipal Police Station on the violence against women and their children in terms of physical abuse prevention programs, emotional abuse response programs, financial/economic abuse mitigation, psychological abuse support services, sexual abuse protection measures, and social abuse community programs? 3. Is there a

significant correlation between the level of occurrence and the extent of implementation of the program? 4. What policy measures can be formulated to strengthen the implementation of violence against women and their children based on the findings of the study?

This study tested the null hypothesis that there is no significant correlation between the frequency level of violence against women and their children and the extent of implementation of the program.

The study included forty-five (45) identified female victims-survivors of intimate partner violence (IPV). This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design, using the following statistical tools/treatments: weighted mean, percentage, frequency count, rank, Spearman's rho, and Student's t-test. The level of significance was set at 0.05.

### Findings

From the statistical treatment of the data with the corresponding analysis and interpretation thereof, the following findings have surfaced:

1. The three (3) most frequently reported physical abuse behaviors were:

My partner inflicts pain in ways that will not leave visible marks (e.g., hair-pulling, twisting arms), 4.27 (Always); My partner/husband physically hits or slaps me, 4.24 (Always); and My partner/husband pushes, kicks, or chokes me during arguments, 4.11 (Often). The obtained weighted mean was 3.99 with a verbal description of "Often." Emotional Abuse. The three (3) emotional abuse indicators with the highest reported frequency are My partner/husband uses my children to manipulate me emotionally, 4.31; I am blamed for all problems in the household, 3.87; and I am isolated from friends/family by my partner/relative, 3.76.

Taken as a whole, it obtained an average score of 3.57 with a verbal description of "Often." Financial/Economic Abuse. The findings indicate that, on average, the economic abuse indicators occur 3.55 times with a verbal rating of "Often." The three most frequently reported behaviors are: My partner/husband deliberately makes me incapable of living independently (3.91); My partner/relative sabotages my job or livelihood (3.89); and I am denied access to basic needs (food, medicine, etc.) as punishment (3.80). The data shows that, on average, these psychological abuse indicators occur "Rarely" (2.52). The most frequently reported behaviors are: I am punished with silence (ignored for days), 2.64; My partner/husband uses suicide threats to control me, 2.60; I feel constantly afraid of my partner's/relative's reactions, 2.56; and I am threatened with harm if I disobey, 2.56. Sexual Abuse.

The data indicates that, on average, these sexual abuse indicators occur "Sometimes" with an average of 2.75. The three most frequently reported behaviors are: I am pressured into unwanted sexual practices, 2.87; I am forced to have sex against my will, 2.82; and I am punished for refusing sexual acts, 2.76. Social Abuse.

The data indicates that, on average, these social abuse indicators occur "Rarely" with an average of 2.43. The three most frequently reported behaviors are: My partner decides whom I can talk to, 2.62 (Sometimes); My cultural/traditional practices are ridiculed, 2.51; and I am prevented from attending community events, 2.47 (both obtained a verbal rating of "Rarely).

2. The findings indicate that, on average, it obtained a score of 2.51 with a verbal rating of "Slightly Implemented." The three most consistently implemented measures are: PNP monitors repeat offenders of physical abuse (2.84); Barangay VAW desks are active and collaborate with PNP (2.76); and PNP conducts regular patrols/visits in high-risk VAWC areas (2.73). Emotional Abuse Response Program. The findings indicate that, on average, it obtained a score of 2.70 with a verbal rating of "Moderately Implemented." The three most consistently implemented measures are: PNP conducts anti-bullying campaigns in schools/barangays, 2.87; Community

support groups for victims are promoted by PNP, 2.76; and PNP trains officers to handle emotional abuse cases sensitively, 2.73. Financial/Economic Abuse Mitigation.

The three (3) most consistently implemented measures are: PNP enforces laws against withholding funds (e.g., salary control), 2.47; PNP assists in recovering stolen/withheld assets of victims, 2.42; and PNP facilitates microfinance partnerships for survivors, 2.42. Taken as a whole, the obtained weighted mean was 2.38 with a verbal description of "Slightly Implemented." Psychological Abuse Support Services. The findings indicate that, on average, it obtained a score of 4.09 with a verbal rating of "Implemented." The three (3) most consistently implemented measures are: PNP tracks psychological abuse patterns in communities (4.33); safe houses for psychological abuse victims are accessible (4.29); and PNP collaborates with psychologists for trauma debriefing (4.18). Sexual Abuse Protection Measures. The findings indicate that, on average, it obtained a score of 4.15 with a verbal rating of "Implemented." The three (3) most consistently implemented measures are: PNP conducts gender sensitivity training for officers, 4.42; PNP enforces "quick response" protocols for rape/sexual assault cases, 4.40; and Schools/barangays are educated on child sexual abuse (RA 7610), 4.38. Social Abuse Community Program. Based on the data, the program is moderately implemented overall, with an average score of 3.36. The three most effectively executed measures are: Social media harassment cases are investigated by PNP, 3.58; Victims restricted from social interactions receive aid, 3.58; and PNP reunites victims with supportive families/friends, 3.51.

3. Physical violence showed a moderate positive correlation with the physical abuse prevention program ( $\rho = 0.452$ ,  $p = 0.267$ ), indicating no significant relationship. Emotional abuse demonstrated a weak negative correlation with the emotional abuse response program ( $\rho = -0.371$ ,  $p = 0.365$ ), which was also non-significant. Financial/economic abuse showed a weak positive correlation with its mitigation program ( $\rho = 0.327$ ,  $p = 0.429$ ), which did not reach significance.

Psychological abuse exhibited a weak negative correlation with psychological support services ( $\rho = -0.355$ ,  $p = 0.388$ ), which was not statistically significant. Social abuse showed a negligible negative correlation with community programs ( $\rho = -0.048$ ,  $p = 0.909$ ), the weakest among all findings. The sole significant finding was for sexual abuse, which demonstrated a strong negative correlation with sexual abuse protection measures ( $\rho = -0.738$ ,  $p = 0.046$ ). This indicates that higher implementation levels of sexual abuse protection programs were significantly associated with lower reported frequencies of sexual abuse, validating the effectiveness of these particular interventions. All other correlations failed to reject the null hypothesis at the 0.05 alpha level, suggesting that for most abuse dimensions, program implementation did not demonstrate a statistically significant linear association with abuse frequency in this sample.

4. Proposed recommendations can be made to strengthen the implementation of the program in eliminating all forms of violence against women and their children.

## CONCLUSIONS

In light of the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. There is a clear hierarchy in the prevalence of violence against women and their children (VAWC) typologies. Physical, emotional, and economic/financial abuse emerged as the most prevalent forms, occurring with concerning frequency. In contrast, sexual, psychological, and

social abuse were reported significantly less often, indicating a distinct pattern in the manifestation of violence within this context.

2. The evaluation reveals a pronounced disparity in program implementation, with robust execution in specialized response services (sexual and psychological abuse) contrasting sharply with under-resourced foundational prevention measures (physical and economic/financial abuse). This stratified performance suggests a reactive rather than holistic preventive strategy, indicating critical gaps in addressing the most frequently reported forms of violence.
3. Sexual abuse and sexual abuse protection measures showed a significantly strong negative correlation with abuse frequency, confirming its effectiveness. All other programs, such as physical, emotional, financial, psychological, and social, yielded non-significant correlations, indicating no linear relationship between program implementation and reduced abuse. These findings highlight the need to strengthen interventions for the five non-significant abuse dimensions while maintaining effective sexual abuse protections.
4. A proposed recommendation titled, *Empowering the Frontlines: A Policy Agenda for Building PNP and Barangay Capacity in Holistic VAWC Elimination*. This policy addresses implementation gaps by strengthening frontline responders and PNP and Barangay officials through training and resources to effectively execute all components of the VAWC program, from prevention to reintegration.

### **Recommendations**

In light of the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were formulated:

1. Directly channel training, funding, and manpower to strengthen the Physical Abuse Prevention and Financial/Economic Abuse Mitigation programs, as these address the most frequently occurring abuse types.
2. Develop and mandate a convergent response protocol that links PNP action with social welfare and livelihood agencies to address the profound economic vulnerability identified as a key contextual factor for victims.
3. Utilize the established infrastructure and best practices as a model to enhance training and systemic coordination for underperforming program areas. Implement mandatory, specialized training for PNP and Barangay VAW Desk officers focused on the specific highest-frequency abuse behaviors (e.g., non-visible physical abuse, child-related emotional manipulation, economic sabotage) to improve detection, response, and prevention.
4. The proposed policy measures can be adopted to rectify the critical implementation gaps identified by the study, which reveal a dangerous mismatch between the most prevalent forms of abuse and the least implemented prevention programs.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Based on the study's recommendations, the researcher suggests the following topics for future research: Examine perpetrator characteristics and interventions to understand the socio-economic and psychological profiles of offenders to inform targeted prevention strategies. Evaluate the effectiveness and accessibility of Barangay VAWC Desks as primary response units, assessing their integration with PNP protocols. Investigate the role of digital tools and social media in both facilitating abuse (e.g., harassment) and enhancing protection and reporting mechanisms. Analyze the cost-effectiveness and resource-allocation models of VAWC programs to optimize budget allocation for maximum community impact. Develop and validate localized assessment tools that capture the nuanced manifestations of abuse within specific cultural and socio-economic contexts.

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