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Awareness of Violence Against Women and Their Children (VAWC) Among Male Individuals

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ABSTRACT: This study determined the level of awareness of Violence Against Women and their Children (VAWC) among male individuals in Victorias City. It specifically described the respondents' demographic profile in terms of age, civil status, educational attainment, and employment status; assessed their level of awareness on VAWC in terms of concept and forms, legal framework, perpetrators and victims, rights of women and children, and consequences and penalties; and examined the significant relationship between demographic profile and awareness level. The study employed a descriptive research design involving male respondents selected through stratified quota sampling. A structured questionnaire was used as the primary data-gathering instrument, and data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, Mann–Whitney U test, and Kruskal–Wallis H test. Findings revealed that most respondents were married, college-educated, and economically active. Overall, the respondents demonstrated a very high level of awareness of VAWC across all indicators, with legal framework obtaining the highest level and perpetrators and victims obtaining the lowest, though still interpreted as very much aware. Furthermore, results showed no significant relationship between age and awareness, while educational attainment and employment status were found to have a highly significant relationship with awareness. This indicates that awareness is strongly influenced by socio-economic factors rather than age. The study concludes that while male respondents are highly aware of VAWC, continuous strengthening of targeted educational and community-based interventions is still necessary to enhance deeper understanding and promote preventive behavior.

KEYWORDS: VAWC awareness, male individuals, legal framework, gender-based violence

INTRODUCTION

Violence against women and their children (VAWC) is still an issue of global concern and a human rights issue of essential importance. Violence against women and children continues to be driven by gender inequality, patriarchal norms, and destructive notions of masculinity. Globally, about a third of women continue to experience physical and/or sexual abuse during their lifetime (World Health Organization, 2021). This needs to be integrated into SDG 5, Target 5.2. The recent literature also acknowledges that working with men and boys in prevention is critical to reducing VAWC and advancing gender equality (Jewkes et al., 2022; UN Women, 2023). A crucial way to reduce gender-based violence is to change men's attitudes and behavior (Flood, 2021).

In the Philippines, VAWC is legislated under Republic Act No. 9262 or the Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act of 2004. However, the incidence of violence is a problem due to inadequacies in awareness and execution of this legal framework. There are still many underreported VAWC events, and male perpetrators still make up a major fraction of the cases (Philippine Commission for Women, 2023). Social norms and limited awareness of legal and reporting systems, as well as the lack of knowledge about how to report, also play a role in

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perpetuating violence (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2022; UNICEF, 2021). Awareness programs are conducted, men's knowledge of VAWC regulations and participation in its prevention are inadequate (Dela Cruz & Bautista, 2022).

In Western Visayas continues to report VAWC cases in Negros Occidental Province. VAWC occurrences remain widespread despite continued advocacy initiatives (Philippine National Police – PRO 6, 2024). Attitudes towards men still bear the traces of cultural conceptions and traditional beliefs that, more often than not, justify violence or see it as a private family affair (Santos & Ramirez, 2022; López & Mendoza, 2023). At the regional level, Western Visayas still reports a high number of VAWC cases in Negros Occidental Province. Advocacy efforts have not reduced the prevalence of violence against women and children (Violence Against Women and Children) (Philippine National Police – PRO 6, 2024). There are still cultural beliefs about men that manifest in attitudes toward them, such as believing that violence against a woman is acceptable or that it occurs only between families (Santos & Ramirez, 2022; Lopez & Mendoza, 2023).In Victorias City, however, barangay VAWC desks have been set up, and the city has become part of the national campaigns. The present data are mainly administrative and do not adequately assess the extent to which male citizens are aware of VAWC legislation and support services available.

Although there is a lot of research around VAWC both globally and nationally, we are not aware of any community-based study that focuses on male knowledge and engagement. This gap is observed in cities like Victorias City, where empirical data on men's knowledge, attitudes, and perspectives on VAWC are scarce. This study aims to fill this gap by producing context-specific data that can serve as a baseline for subsequent studies and policy formulation. The results will lead to improvements in local Gender and Development (GAD) programs, better advocacy techniques, and encourage proactive male participation in preventing violence. In the end, this feeds into national agendas and global pledges to end all forms of violence against women and children.

Statement of the Problem

This study determined the level of awareness of Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) among male individuals in Victorias City. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of male respondents in terms of:
    1.1 Age;
    1.2 Educational Attainment; and
    1.3 Employment Status?
2. What is the level of awareness on Violence Against Women and Children when taken as a whole and when grouped according to the aforementioned variables in terms of:
    2.1 Concept and forms of VAWC;
    2.2 Legal framework;
    2.3 Perpetrators and victims of VAWC;
    2.4 Rights of women and children under the law, and;
    2.5 Consequences and penalties of committing VAWC?
3. Is there a significant difference between the level of awareness on Violence Against Women and Children when taken as a whole and when grouped according to the aforementioned variables.

Statement of the Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between the demographic profile of the respondents and their level of awareness of VAWC.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Violence against women is a severe public health problem and a violation of human rights worldwide. Current research continues to study intervention programs with violent offenders. For example, recent research suggests that reflective group therapies for male abusers are extensively used and often based on gender-transformative techniques. These programs are often associated with government agencies and are designed to improve behavior, hold people accountable, and reduce recidivism. Evidence suggests that, when carefully monitored and analyzed, organized intervention programs can help reduce recidivism and improve gender relations (Adriana Beiras et al., 2021).

Recent literature also confirms the transformative effect of men and boys' engagement not only on women and girls but also on men themselves. Research over the past five years has shown that when males are involved in prevention, healthier relationships, better mental health, and stronger community support systems result. There has been increased incorporation of male involvement tactics into broader gender equality programs in government-led frameworks and action plans. Sustained initiatives are supported by evidence that includes multi-sectoral collaboration, policy support, and community-based education (Lana Wells et al., 2022).

Finally, current research points to the necessity to overcome the individual level of intervention and address the structural and institutional imbalances that perpetuate violence against women. Recent research has critiqued past efforts for focusing too much on changing attitudes and not enough on systemic concerns, including patriarchy, socio-economic inequality, and cultural norms. Scholars say that inclusive and intersectional approaches that recognize the multiplicity of gender identities and sexual orientations are necessary for effective violence prevention. It is important to revisit previous beliefs about masculinity and male engagement to enhance long-term preventive measures (Michael Flood, 2021).

As a common human rights abuse, VAW is ultimately a manifestation of gender inequality. Awareness of laws like the Republic Act 9262 is increasing in the Philippines, according to research. However, an understanding of the intricate nature of the law seems still unreachable, especially among men. Access to information, socioeconomic status, and educational attainment affect how informed a person becomes about laws against violence, studies today conclude (Garcia et al., 2022). Awareness is not enough without knowledge on behavior and community involvement on preventive programs.

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According to Gerada et al. (2021), domestic violence remains a social problem in the Philippines, and even if the government works on it, violence against women would persist. It appears that awareness efforts and legislative implementation have improved public awareness of the issue; however, there are challenges in ensuring the sustained enforcement of behavioral change among male partners. Our findings show that awareness and attitudes towards VAW are influenced by civil status, education, and socio-cultural factors. More localized follow-up initiatives, familiarity, and community-based monitoring methods are suggested on improving outcomes.

Research on knowledge of gender-based violence is applicable internationally. For example, Encabo and Dura (2024) studied the public awareness of Republic Act 9262 in Tagum City, Philippines. The study found considerable variation in awareness by educational achievement and employment status, but no significant variation by age. Awareness of the laws, sanctions, and protective measures on VAWC was associated with greater education and a stable job. The study shows that socio-economic and educational characteristics are stronger determinants of awareness than age-group differences.

Caban (2022) briefly explored women's awareness of Republic Act 9262, finding that higher educational attainment and employment exposure reduce unawareness of the VAWC legislation, while age was not a significant factor. The more educated and economically active respondents are, the more likely they are to be aware, as they have greater access to information and seminars and are more engaged in institutional activities. It stressed the need for gender awareness and legal literacy information dissemination for less educated and unemployed individuals.

On Concept and Forms of VAWC

Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) has been globally recognized as a diverse problem involving physical, sexual, psychological, and economic abuse. Recent research shows the problem now as being deeply rooted in gender inequality and in societies that tolerate violence. Myint et al. (2024) state that underlying influences are still at work, sustaining acceptance of spousal abuse, citing that society's attitude still affects acceptance of the problem. Additionally, today's scholars allege that psychological and emotional abuse, even online, are some of the most prevalent and underreported types of violence (Ceballos & Haensch, 2025). Exposure to violence as a child makes one more likely to experience or commit violence as an adult, showing that violence begets more violence (Ceballos & Haensch, 2025).More abnormal violence is described by Caban 2022) as psycho-emotionally caused forms of Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) that are indicative of the power-controlled dimensions of sociopathology. Igorot names for physical harm, sexual coercion, emotional abuse, and economic deprivation are commonly used and explicitly mentioned in laws and awareness-raising campaigns about VAWC.

On Legal Framework

The legislation around VAWC has developed significantly in recent years, with the passage of Republic Act No. 9262 in the Philippines. Recent studies note that the law is holistic in its protection, encompassing many forms of abuse such as crimes and providing mechanisms such as protection orders and services (Colot, 2025). Furthermore, research shows that the measures under RA 9262 include steps in healthcare, protections under the law, and obligations for government entities to enforce (De Guzman, 2023). Despite a strong footing, issues do remain in awareness, training, and enforcement (De Guzman, 2023)

Likewise, it appears that the Philippine legal system may be passed together, ensuring that other stripes of legislation, such as the Safe Spaces Act and the Magna Carta of Women, improve gender protection policies. Unfortunately, architecture and access to justice is still of massive concern (DBP Data Center, 2024).

On Perpetrators and Victims of VAWC

In a recent study we examine that the most common perpetrators of VAWC are men, namely intimate partners, while the most frequently victimized individuals are women and children. Socio-economic characteristics, academic background and cultural standards were found to affect perpetration and victimization (Myint et al., 2024).

Further, a study in the Philippines finds that victims are frequently fearful of disclosure regarding abuse, both because of fear and stigma, and due to a lack of knowledge about existing legal remedies. Cultural expectations and cultural forces play a significant role in underreporting (Buenafe, 2024). Also, studies find that perpetrators demonstrate regular patterns of exerting control through emotional manipulation and economic abuse. At the same time, victims tend to be subjected to further abuse due to dependency and lack of access to support (De Guzman, 2025).

On Rights of Women and Children under the Law

Documentary Assassins Women with Rights Set before Make Absolutely Idyllic RHA 9262 are among the Rights of Women, Access to Justice from abusers surrounded by a bounty Children are looking to avail themselves of goodies and protecting shelters (Colot). Recent studies, however, show that understanding of these rights is not widespread, and many women lack the knowledge of how to avail of these protections afforded under the law. Education and dissemination campaigns are vital to empowering women to claim protection (Caban, 2022). Research also connects the absence of enjoyment of such rights (by women) with social stigma or fear of retribution, as well as with the absence of institutional mechanisms to carry out the provisions of the law effectively (Buenafe, 2024).On Consequences and Penalties of Committing VAWC

Legal Penalties and Social Consequences of Committing VAWC

Penalties of committing VAWC. The penalties for those who commit VAWC under RA 9262 are imprisonment, fines, counseling, and an anti-violence restraining order depending on the nature of the act (De Guzman, 2023). The current literature suggests that they are defined correctly, and as the law is applied and enforced in the courts. However, the time it takes to resolve them and the fact that services may not be available to victims may diminish the law's deterrent effect (Colot, 2025). Studies indicate that offenders suffer social disgrace, difficulty in finding a job, and a broken family and relations in the beginning. However, in the long run, it will have rehabilitation programs for criminals and networks for victims (SDS, 2024).

Lorenzetti et al. (2021) pointed to men as crucial agents in the prevention of violence against women. There is still minimal knowledge, however, on men's awareness, attitudes, and ability to participate in healthy relationships and violence prevention programs. This implies that even when men are in socially responsible and active roles (e.g., working or married), awareness and education campaigns remain necessary to increase their involvement in preventing VAWC. Similarly, a local study in the Philippines supports the findings on awareness gaps.

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As revealed by Balahadia et al. (2022), the respondents varied in their knowledge of the laws and how to report acts of VAWC. The fact that some respondents lacked adequate knowledge despite the availability of government programs demonstrates that demographic characteristics such as education and occupation may not necessarily correlate with high levels of knowledge. There is a need for ongoing dissemination of information within the community.

As Valdez et al. (2022) noted, while awareness of violence against women exists, social norms and perception create barriers to understanding and responding to abuse. Such indicates that with higher awareness levels, there can be different, deeper understanding, particularly in differentiating victims & abusers. Thus, this supports the little spread in your lowest variable.

Likewise, the local study by Balahadia et al. (2022) supports the finding that respondents are generally educated or very well aware of the regulations on VAWC. But the poll indicated that many people do not disclose incidents due to fear, shame, or social stigma, despite high levels of knowledge. This implies that awareness does not necessarily translate into action and indicates the need to improve not only information but also attitudes and behavioral responses.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The current study is based on the Social Learning Theory by Bandura (1977) and Theory of Planned Behavior by Ajzen (1991) as a foundation for measuring the level of awareness of Violence Against Women and their Children (VAWC) among male persons. Social Learning Theory states that VAWC is learned through exposure and knowledge gained from watching and engaging with family, classmates, the media, and the community. The social environment is where a masculine person internalizes norms, attitudes, and actions connected to violence and gender roles.It is influenced by demographic variables like age, educational level, and work status. Through this theory, researchers can examine indicators of awareness such as VAWC and its types, the provisions of Republic Act No. 9262, and the impact of the abusive act.

This is another theory to support the study. Based on this, Planned Behavior by Ajzen (1991) analyzes the role of awareness on behavioral intentions and acts. Knowledge about VAWC is related to men's attitudes towards violence, perceived societal norms, and perceived capacity to avoid or report abusive acts. A greater understanding of reporting procedures and potential legal ramifications might lead to more responsible practices and greater support for preventive efforts. The above hypotheses, collectively, provide a basis for explaining the association between demographic factors and the extent of awareness of VAWC among boys, and how this awareness could serve as a guide for community-based interventions and local government initiatives in Victorias City.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This diagram illustrates the framework of the study "Awareness of Violence Against Women and their Children (VAWC) Among Male Individuals". It shows the respondents' profile, their awareness of the subject, and the study's results. The respondents' profile, correlated to their awareness and to the outcoming of the study, should be viewed as an independent variable whereas their awareness of the subjects are the dependent variable indicated by the understanding the concept and forms of VAWC, knowledge of RA 9262, recognition of the victims and perpetrators, awareness of rights, and understanding the consequences and penalty. The diagram highlights how these demographics and awareness levels shape the findings, which, in turn, inform proposed intervention programs. In the end we hope to present baseline data on Male awareness of VAWC in Victorias City which will recommend future evidence-based strategies for the local government, community stakeholders and social welfare programs, and how to raise awareness, promote preventive behaviors, and enhance initiatives related to VAWC.

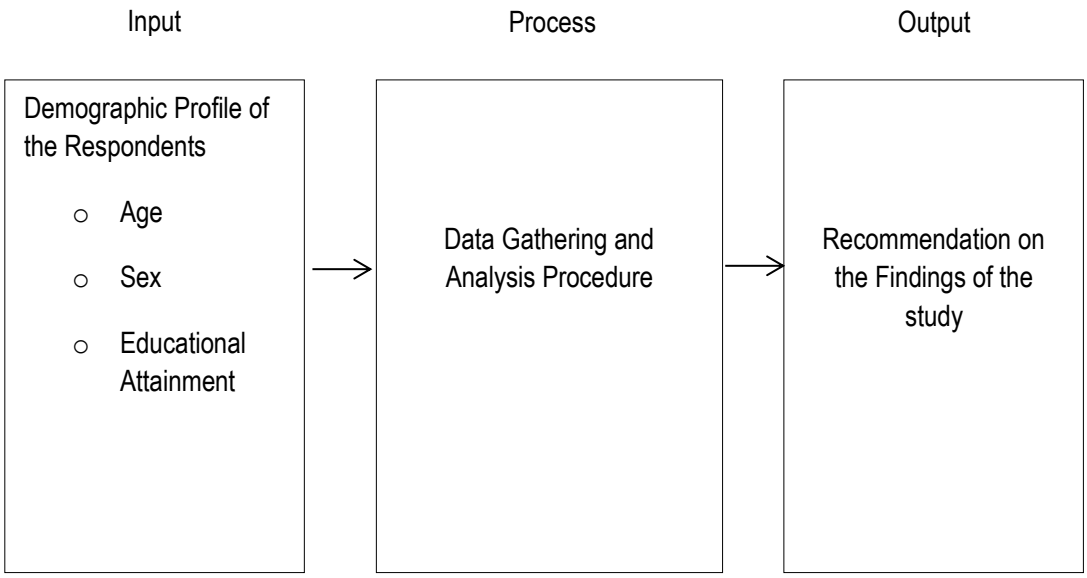


Figure 1. Schematic Diagram of the Conceptual Framework of the Study

Significance of the Study

This study is on the awareness of Violence Against Women and their Children (VAWC) among male individuals in Victorias City, which is significant to various sectors:

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Local Government Unit Officials. The study provides baseline data to guide the development of targeted programs and policies to prevent VAWC.

School Administrators. The results of this study emphasize the importance of educational interventions and awareness campaigns to promote responsible behavior among students.

General Public. The study raises awareness about the issue, encourages community involvement in prevention, and fosters a culture of respect and protection for women and children.

Policy Makers. The study offers evidence-based insights to support the formulation or improvement of laws and programs addressing VAWC.

Future Researchers. The study's findings will serve as a reference for similar studies in other populations or locations.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter covers research design, participants/respondents, research instrument validity and reliability, data analysis, data collection methods, and the statistical tools to be employed.

Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive research design about the level of awareness of Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) among male persons in Victoria's City. Descriptive research is appropriate when the main aim of the study is to systematically characterize a population's characteristics, knowledge, or situations without altering the factors (Creswell, 2020). The design was used to describe the demographic profile of the respondents and their level of awareness of VAWC.

Furthermore, Polit and Beck (2021) indicate that descriptive research allows researchers to obtain accurate information about a phenomenon in its natural state. This design is suitable for assessing awareness of the concept and types of VAWC, the legal basis under Republic Act No. 9262, offenders and victims, the rights of women and children, and the consequences and sanctions of committing VAWC. The descriptive technique provides a comprehensive picture of how men see and understand the issues linked to VAWC.

Babbie (2020) further noted that descriptive research is typically used in social science studies to collect factual information and identify trends in society. The descriptive research design employed in this study provides a way to present summarised data that can serve as baseline information for Victorias City. The results are expected to guide the design of appropriate local government interventions, community awareness campaigns, and future research on the prevention of Violence Against Women and their Children.

Participants of the Study

The survey was conducted among 150 male respondents in three selected barangays in Victorias City, which were identified based on high reported cases of Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC). These respondents were selected to determine the level of awareness of VAWC in communities where the problem is more common. The concentration of these barangays has enabled the study to generate contextual data more relevant to areas more exposed to difficulties related to VAWC. This research applied purposive and convenience sampling procedures. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling approach. The respondents are selected purposively based on features and criteria relevant to the study's objectives (John W. Creswell & J. David Creswell, 2018).

The three barangays with the highest number of reported VAWC cases were purposively selected. Convenience sampling is the process of selecting respondents who are available and willing to participate in the study (Earl Babbie, 2016). The technique was used to recruit qualified male residents of the selected barangays during the data collection period. The combination of sampling procedures employed was appropriate as it enabled the researcher to select individuals with the right traits and was also efficient and practical for data collection.

Research Instrument

A self-administered structured questionnaire was the main research tool used to determine how aware male persons in Victorias City are regarding Violence Against Women and Their Children (VAWC). The instrument included information based on literature that is relevant to the subject matter, Republic Act No. 9262, and other studies. This was done to ensure that the instrument was both relevant and clear. It has two parts: Part I gathered the demographic profile of the respondents, which includes age, civil status, educational attainment, and employment status, while Part II measured the level of awareness of the respondents on VAWC in terms of its concept and forms, legal framework, perpetrators and victims, rights of women and children, reporting mechanisms, and consequences and penalties. The respondents' awareness levels were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Not Aware to Very Much Aware.

Validity and reliability of the instrument was determined by expert appraisal and pilot testing. Content Validity was evaluated by a panel of competent experts using the Content Validity Ratio (CVR) devised by Charles H. Lawshe (1975). The instrument yielded an overall CVR of 0.99, indicating that the items were highly relevant and vital to the study. The pilot test was conducted on 30 male respondents from the Municipality of Manapla who were not part of the main study to test the reliability. The Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient of 0.995, derived from the replies, confirmed that the questionnaire was extremely reliable and adequate for data collection and exhibited outstanding internal consistency.

Data Gathering Procedure

Before proceeding to data collection, the researcher sought permission from the proper authorities of the City Government of Victorias and the concerned barangay officials to conduct the study among male residents of the City. Once permission was granted, the researcher decided with barangay officials and other members of the community as to the selection of target respondents and the convenient time for the distribution of the survey questionnaires. The respondents were orientated regarding the study goal, and they were provided an informed consent to ensure voluntary participation, confidentiality and other ethical issues.

Validated survey questionnaires were administered to the selected respondents in male respondents in the City of Victorias. Respondents were given adequate time to answer the questionnaire and were assisted by the researcher for clarifications of their answers. Subsequently, the

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questionnaires were collected and checked if filled out completely, and then grouped systematically for encoding, tabulation, and analysis to validate the data obtained.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The analysis method must meet the standards and expectations outlined earlier. The collected data was analyzed using the correct descriptive statistics to accurately represent the data and its interpretation. The analysis was focused on the following: Describing each respondent's demographic profile and measuring the level of awareness among respondents regarding violence against women and children (VAWC).

To identify the demographic characteristics of the male respondents, statistical frequency counts and percentage distributions were utilized to describe each of the demographic characteristics under investigation including age, civil status, educational level, employment status and barangay of residence. In summary, these statistical tools provided descriptive summaries of the demographic characteristics of the male respondents included within the research project sample.

For the second objective, which sought to determine the level of awareness among male individuals regarding VAWC, a weighted mean was used. The computed mean scores were interpreted using the scale below to describe respondents' levels of awareness regarding the concept and forms of VAWC, the legal framework (RA 9262), perpetrators and victims, the rights of women and children, reporting mechanisms, and consequences and penalties.

Mean score	Descriptive Interpretation	Verbal Interpretation
4.21 - 5.00	Very Much Aware	The respondent demonstrates a very high level of awareness of VAWC.
3.41 - 4.20	Always Aware	The respondent is generally aware of VAWC and understands its basic concepts and legal aspects.
2.61 - 3.40	Moderately Aware	The respondent has a fair level of awareness of VAWC but may lack complete understanding of some aspect
1.81 - 2.60	Sometimes Aware	The respondent shows limited awareness of VAWC and its related laws and services.
1.00 - 1.80	Not Aware	The respondent lacks awareness and understanding of VAWC and its implications.

For the third objective, which examined whether there was a significant difference in the level of awareness of VAWC among male individuals grouped by demographic profile**,** nonparametric statistical tests were used. The Mann–Whitney U test was applied to two-group demographic variables, while the Kruskal–Wallis H test was used for variables with more than two groups.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents

Profile		Frequency	Percent
Age	26 to 30 yers old	27	18.0
	21 to 35 years old	49	32.7
	36 to 40 years old	42	28.0
	41 years old and above	32	21.3
Educational Attainment	Elementary	20	13.3
	High School	51	34.0
	College	54	36.0
	Vocational	25	16.7
Employment Status	Employed	76	50.7
	Unemployed	31	20.7
	Self-Employed	43	28.7
Total		150	100.0

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the 150 respondents by age, educational attainment, and work position. Most of the respondents are in the age group of 21 to 35 years, with a total of 49 respondents (32.7%), while the least is the age group of 26 to 30 years, with a total of 27 respondents (18.0%). This shows that most respondents are young adults in their most productive years and are likely to be active in work, family, and community activities. They are highly represented and may be more exposed to information and to societal concerns related to the research. On the other hand, the lower percentage of responders in the 26-30 age group indicates significantly lower participation in this age group. The study predominantly includes young adults but highlights the need to develop programs and measures aimed at this demographic as well as growing the number of participants from younger and older demographic groups in future programs and projects.by less-represented age groups in future initiatives.

According to respondents' highest level of education, the largest group is college-educated respondents (54 respondents, 36.0%), and the smallest group is basic education respondents (20 respondents, 13.3%). This indicates that most participants are well educated, which can lead to good comprehension, critical thinking, and mastery of the subject under study. Fewer respondents had only an elementary education, indicating

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less representation of persons with lower levels of education. It also indicates that most respondents were college-educated and that the results may represent people with greater academic exposure, and it emphasizes the importance of providing information and interventions in a simple, accessible way to include respondents with a more limited educational background.

In terms of employment status, most respondents are employed (76, 50.7%), while the least are unemployed (31, 20.7%). The finding indicates that the majority of respondents are economically engaged and are likely to have greater exposure to information, institutional support, and opportunities that shape their knowledge and views. Conversely, the unemployed respondents constitute a smaller subgroup and may face economic and social disadvantages, reflected in their access to resources and level of engagement. It is a strong possibility that the data from this survey will reflect the opinion of people who currently hold jobs due to the fact that nearly all respondents were employed. Therefore, future initiatives and changes in policy must focus specifically on being engaged with and supporting the unemployed group in order to represent their opinions and experiences fully so as to create a long-term plan that addressed all residents within this region.

Demographically speaking, the data shows that most participants were between 21 and 35 years old with college degrees and currently employed. The findings of the study reflect predominantly the opinions of those currently in their productive years who also tend to have a higher level of educational attainment and be actively participating in the economy. There were also some minorities among the respondents and others who were not fully represented by this demographic, which emphasizes the need for inclusive solutions that address the unique needs of all respondents regardless of age, education, or employment status.

The findings of the present study are corroborated by an international study, particularly with the male knowledge and involvement in the prevention of violence. Men are important to the prevention of violence against women, but their understanding, attitudes, and their ability to engage in healthy relationships and violence prevention activities are poorly understood (Lorenzetti et al., 2021 . This implies that awareness and education interventions are still needed to promote men's participation in avoiding VAWC, even when men are in socially active and responsible roles (e.g., marriage or employment). The findings on knowledge gaps are also supported by a local study in the Philippines. The study by Balahadia et al. (2022) found that there was no uniformity in respondents' understanding of VAWC regulations and reporting methods. Even with government initiatives in place, some people lack sufficient expertise. This shows that demographic indicators like education and work status are not necessarily predictors of a high level of awareness; therefore, there is a need for continuous, targeted information dissemination at the community level.

Table 2. Level of awareness on Violence against Women and their Children

Variables	Mean	SD	Interpretation
A. Concept and forms of VAWC	4.73	0.59	Very Much Aware
B. Legal Framework	4.75	0.57	Very Much Aware
C. Perpetrators and victims of VAWC	4.68	0.63	Very Much Aware
D. Rights of women and children under the law	4.72	0.61	Very Much Aware
E. Consequences and penalties of committing VAWC	4.70	0.60	Very Much Aware

From the results, it is seen that all areas are considered as "Very Much Aware", which suggests the male respondents have a great level of awareness of VAWC. The top variable is the legal framework. This suggests that the responders have the most knowledge of the laws on VAWC, including the requirements and protections under existing legislation. This suggests that awareness campaigns and government initiatives have been successful in educating men about VAWC legislation.

On the other hand, Perpetrators and Victims of VAWC are classified as the lowest among the "Very Much Aware" group. This indicates that while responders are generally informed, there may be some gaps in fully understanding the diverse roles, qualities, and situations of victims and perpetrators. It signals the need for a more attuned awareness in recognizing all forms and instances of violence.

The other aspects, Concept and Forms of VAWC, Rights of Women and Children under the Law, and Consequences and Penalties of Committing VAWC, also show a high level of understanding. This indicates that responders are aware of the nature of VAWC, the rights protected by the law, and the legal consequences of such conduct. The findings reveal that male respondents were highly aware of VAWC in all facets. However, there remain knowledge gaps in some areas, especially regarding the identification of perpetrators and victims, to improve preventive efforts and promote responsible behavior.

This finding is reinforced by the study by Valdez et al. (2022), which found that knowledge of violence against women, but cultural norms and perception, are obstacles to how individuals understand and respond to violence. This suggests that, even with high awareness levels, there can still be a difference in deeper understanding (particularly in identifying victims and perpetrators), confirming the little variation in your lowest variable. Likewise, a local study in the Philippines by Balahadia et al. (2022) confirms the finding that respondents are typically aware/very aware of VAWC legislation. But the poll indicated that, despite heightened awareness, many people still do not report cases due to fear, humiliation, or social stigma. This implies that knowledge does not always lead to action, and hence, there is a need to reinforce knowledge, attitudes, and behavioral responses.

Table 3. Significant Relationship Between the demographic profile of the respondents and their level of awareness of VAWC

Variable	Test Stat	P-Value	Decision for H_o	Conclusion
Age	.136	.938	Fail to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	8.365	.000	Reject Ho	Highly Significant
Employment Status	9.222	.000	Reject Ho	Highly Significant

Note: Highly Significant (HS) if p-value is lesser than 0.01

Significant (Sig.) if p-value is lesser than 0.05

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Table 3 presents the results of the statistical analysis examining the relationship between respondents' demographic profiles and their level of awareness of Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC). The variables included age, civil status, educational attainment, and employment status. The decision on significance was based on p-values, where results are considered highly significant when p is less than 0.01 and significant when p is less than 0.05.

This finding implies that there is no significant association between respondents' age and their level of awareness of VAWC. This suggests that awareness does not differ by age group and age is not a factor in understanding difficulties associated with VAWC.

Regarding educational achievement, the data indicate a strong association with awareness of VAWC. This means that the higher the respondents' educational attainment, the more aware they are of VAWC. More exposure to scholarly discourse, awareness campaigns, and formal learning could explain this to improve understanding of gender-based violence and relevant laws.

The study also suggests a very strong association between work status and awareness of VAWC. This shows that employed people are more likely to have greater awareness because they have more access to information, workplace seminars, and social contacts, which foster understanding of legal and social issues.

The data indicate that awareness of VAWC is extremely significantly related to educational attainment and work position, but not significantly related to age. This indicates that socio-economic and educational characteristics have a more powerful impact on awareness than biological age, underscoring the role of education and employment in increasing knowledge of VAWC regulations and protections.

The study by Encapo and Dura (2024), which examined public awareness of Republic Act 9262 in Tagum City, Philippines,, supported the outcome of this study,, which illustrates the international applicability of gender-based violence awareness research. The study also identified significant disparities in awareness by education and employment level, but no significant differences by age. Higher-educated and secure-employment groups had a better understanding of VAWC regulations, fines, and protective actions. The study suggests that socio-economic and educational variables are better markers of awareness than age-group-based demographic inequalities. Similar to Caban's (2022) study, which evaluated women's awareness of Republic Act 9262, the results showed that educational attainment and employment-related exposure significantly influence awareness of VAWC legislation, while age is not a determining factor. The study observed that increased awareness was mostly among respondents who were better educated and economically active, as they had greater access to information, seminars, and institutional activities. It also stresses the necessity for information distribution campaigns to enhance legal literacy among the less educated and unemployed people.

CONCLUSION

According to the results, the respondents in the research are generally married, educated, and economically active. They come from a population with a demographic profile likely to be exposed to information, social interaction, and community-oriented initiatives that may contribute to their understanding of social concerns, such as Violence Against Women and their Children.

The study also concluded that respondents have a very high level of awareness of VAWC, indicating that existing laws, education campaigns, and community activities are effective in disseminating knowledge. However, there are still gaps in knowledge, particularly in identifying perpetrators and victims, which may require more targeted educational efforts.

Regarding the link between variables, educational attainment and employment position are significant drivers of VAWC awareness, whereas age does not significantly affect levels of awareness. Civil status was not analyzed due to a lack of diversity among respondents. The results generally show that socio-economic and educational factors play a greater role in awareness than age, highlighting the need to intensify awareness campaigns on education and employment to foster more appropriate knowledge and prevent VAWC

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study on the awareness of Violence Against Women and their Children (VAWC) among male individuals in Victorias City, the following recommendations are hereby presented:

The LGU shall frequently conduct VAWC information campaigns that are improved and localized, particularly among male community members. Given the substantial impact of education and employment on awareness, the LGU may consider conducting workplace seminars, barangay orientations, and community outreach programs to further increase understanding of VAWC laws, especially among the less educated and unemployed.

School administrators are encouraged to incorporate gender sensitivity and VAWC knowledge into classroom discussions, seminars, and student development activities. Schools may also organize regular advocacy campaigns, symposia, and value development events that highlight respect, equality, and legal literacy. This will help the next generations to understand VAWC and be responsible in their relationships.

The General Public is strongly advised to actively participate in community-based programs. Residents should be encouraged to take awareness training, report abuse, and support victims through proper channels. Open conversations among families and communities can reduce stigma and foster communal responsibility for preventing VAWC.

Policy-makers should routinely review and strengthen existing laws,, such as Republic Act No. 9262, to ensure their effective implementation. Policies should also focus on preventive activities, such as education, offender rehabilitation, and the expansion of support services for victims. "It's also important to beef up enforcement mechanisms at the local level.

For Researchers, More research on many elements that may effect VAWC awareness such as cultural attitudes, media exposure and digital literacy are urged. Qualitative approaches can also be used in further study to better understand the attitudes and behaviors regarding VAWC across different groups.

This study can serve as a baseline reference for future researchers who would conduct comparable investigations in other cities or provinces. Future research should widen the scope to include diverse demographic groups such as young, women and non-married persons to understand VAWC awareness from different segments of society in a more comprehensive manner.

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