

Awareness and Perception of Housewives in Selected Municipalities of Palawan Regarding R.A. 9262 (Anti-Violence against Women and their Children Act of 2004)

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Abstract - *This study was conducted to determine the level of awareness and perception of housewives in selected municipalities of Palawan regarding R.A. 9262. Specifically, it aimed to determine the demographic characteristics of the respondents; to identify the level of awareness of housewives regarding R.A. 9262; and to find out their perception regarding the Act.*

Seven municipalities which include Aborlan, Narra, Brooke's Point, Quezon, Rizal, Bataraza and El Nido were the study sites. One hundred women from each municipality were purposely selected that served as respondents with a total of 700. Those considered were married, with husband at present and who has children. The survey questionnaire which was translated in Filipino was composed of two parts. Part one was about the demographic characteristics of the respondents while part two dealt on statements about acts of violence against women & their children as stated in RA 9262 that determined the level of awareness & perception on the provisions of the said Republic Act.

Results revealed that the mean age of the respondents was 38.39 years old and the mean number of children was 3.63. In addition, most of the respondents were plain housewives has 3-4 children, high school graduates and within the PhP 5,000.00 and below bracket of monthly income.

With regards to the level of awareness, majority of the respondents were moderately aware of the provisions of R.A. 9262. As to the perception of the respondents, they strongly agree that the provisions or statements are considered acts of violence against women and their children.

Based on the results of the study, an Action Plan will be proposed which will focus on the enhancement of the housewives' awareness regarding R.A. 9262 to provide information and make them fully aware of the provisions of the republic act and be safe from domestic violence.

Keywords – *perception, awareness, anti-violence, housewife, children*

I. INTRODUCTION

Violence against women is perhaps the most shameful human rights violation, and it is perhaps the most pervasive. It knows no boundaries of geography, culture or wealth. As long as it continues, we cannot claim to be making real progress towards equality, development and peace (Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General).

Republic Act No. 9262, known as the "Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act of 2004," defines violence against women as any act or series of acts committed against wives, former wives, or women in any form of intimate relationship with the perpetrator, which result in or is likely to result in physical, sexual, psychological harm or suffering, or

economic abuse. It considers these acts of violence a public offense, and provides for protective measures and other necessary relief for the survivor victims.

In March 2004 President Macapagal-Arroyo signed into law Republic Act 9262 or The Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act.

This law was created in response to protect the welfare of housewives and all the women and their children. Furthermore, the State values the dignity of women and children and guarantees full respect for human rights. The State also recognizes the need to protect the family and its members particularly women and children, from violence and threats to their personal safety and security [R.A. 9262, Sec. 2].

According to the 2008 Statistical Report of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCFRW), violence against women (VAW) cases in the Philippines rose to 21 percent from the 2007 report. With the implementation of the Republic Act 9262 (RA 9262) or the Anti Violence against Women and Children Act of 2004, it is alarming that the number of violations against women's rights did not decrease and has in fact risen (<http://www.ra9262.com/>).

In addition, based on the data presented by Atty. Katrina Legarda during the Women's month celebration in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan on March 8, 2011, violation of R.A. 9262 ranked second at 17.8 percent. However, data cover only a six-year period starting from its implementation in 2004. Among the regions, Region 11 (Davao) posted the highest reported VAW cases from January to December 2009 with 2,653 cases accounting 28 % of the total reported VAW cases nationwide. NCR comes next at 1,393 (14.7%) reported VAW cases followed by Region 7 (Central Visayas) with 1,123 reported VAW cases or 11.8 % of the total reported VAW cases nationwide.

Atty. Legarda, emphasized in her message that by not knowing the laws and legislation regarding family matters, wives become hopeless in front of judges in Courts. This leads them to lose their cases, even though they could have easily won if they were more aware of their rights."

Hence, this study was conducted to be able to determine the awareness and perception of housewives regarding R.A. 9262 otherwise known as the Anti-Violence against Women and their Children Act of 2004.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In general, the research dealt with the level of awareness and perception of housewives in selected municipalities of Palawan regarding R.A. 9262. Specifically, the study aimed to determine the demographic characteristics of the respondents; to identify the level of awareness of housewives regarding R.A. 9262; and to find out their perception regarding R.A. 9262.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Violence against women in Asian countries say that "Gender Inequality and Vulnerability are Risk of Violence" that are based on traditional, economic, social and cultural factors. The major characteristics of women are that they are in the structurally weaker position in all societies: educationally, occupationally, and economically. This almost guarantees their

economic dependency on men and/or poverty. On the other hand, being born female ensures a double struggle to access basic services. Because gender bias is a social and cultural construction, it has existed since the men and women were young. This unquestioned gender inequality, especially in terms of the gender role difference between men and women can influence and even attract violence (Astbury, 2003).

A milestone in the advocacy to eliminate VAW was the passage of Republic Act No. 9262 or the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004. This was signed into law last March 8, 2004 during the celebration of "International Women's Day." It penalizes all forms of abuse and violence within the family and intimate relationships.

RA 9262 penalizes the commission of violence against women and their children (VAWC). It provides for penalties for violence committed against his child whether legitimate or illegitimate, within or without the family abode, which results in (or is likely to result in) physical or psychological harm or suffering. Also, economic abuse including threats of such acts, battery, assault, coercion, harassment or arbitrary deprivation of liberty are penalized. Among others, it provides for the security of the complainant and her family through the protection orders from the barangay and court. Furthermore, it recognizes "battered woman syndrome" (BWS) which refers to a scientifically defined pattern of psychological or behavioral symptoms found in women living in abusive relationships as a result of cumulative abuse, as an acceptable defense for actions committed by a victim as a result of battering.

According to Caparas and Amparado (2012), the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004 (hereinafter referred to as the "Anti-VAWC Act") is the result of a decade of advocacy of victim-survivors, women's human rights advocates and organizations, women legislators, government agencies and the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women. The broad definition of VAW in the law was patterned after the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, as referring to "any act or series of acts committed by any person against a woman who is his wife, former wife, or against a woman with whom the person has or had a sexual or dating relationship, or with whom he has a common child, or against her child whether legitimate or illegitimate, within or without the family abode, which result in or is likely to result in physical, sexual, psychological harm or suffering, or economic abuse including threats of such acts, battery, assault,

coercion, harassment or arbitrary deprivation of liberty.” It covers all forms of violence, such as physical, sexual, psychological, and economic.

The law is gender-specific, protecting the rights of women only and their children. Only women may file actions under the Anti-VAWC Act, while the offenders may either be men or women with whom the victims are or were in lesbian relationships, because the definition includes past or present sexual or dating relationships. Senator Pia Cayetano created a primer which discusses about Violence against women and children (<http://www.mydailyrace.com/>).

Different acts of violence

1. Physical violence – acts that include bodily or physical harm;
2. Sexual violence– acts which are sexual in nature;
3. Psychological violence– commission or omission of acts which cause mental or emotional suffering of the victim;
4. Economic abuse– acts that make a woman financially dependent on the offender.

Who are protected under the law?

The Anti-VAWC Act protects women and their children, specifically:

1. Wife or former wife of the offender;
2. Woman with whom the offender has or had a dating or sexual relationship;
3. The mother of the child of the offender;
4. The child, whether legitimate or illegitimate of the woman.

Who are punished by the law?

The following are liable:

1. Husbands or former husbands;
2. Any person with whom the victim has or had a sexual or dating relationship (e.g. boyfriends, live-in partners, or lesbian partners);
3. Any person with whom the victim has a common child;
4. Father of the child-victim

Conceptual Framework

The study is anchored on Republic Act 9262 or Anti-Violence against Women and Their Children Act of 2004. refers to any act or a series of acts committed by any person against a woman who is his wife, former wife, or against a woman with whom the person has or

had a sexual or dating relationship, or with whom he has a common child, or against her child whether legitimate or illegitimate, within or without the family abode, which result in or is likely to result in physical, sexual, psychological harm or suffering, or economic abuse including threats of such acts, battery, assault, coercion, harassment or arbitrary deprivation of liberty (www.lawphil.net).

IV. METHODS

Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in selected municipalities of mainland Palawan namely: Aborlan, Narra, Brooke's Point, Quezon, Rizal, Roxas and El Nido from April to October 2013.

Research Design

The determination of the level of awareness and Perception of Housewives in selected Municipalities of Palawan regarding R.A. 9262 was descriptive in nature and the survey method was employed to generate the needed information for the study.

Respondents

The respondents of the study were the housewives of the different municipalities in Palawan. The respondent-housewife were married, with husband at the time of the research conduct and those with children.

Sampling Procedure

Purposive sampling of the housewives were employed to get one hundred housewives for each selected municipality. They were randomly selected from the list which were obtained from the Municipal Planning and Development Office of the LGU.

Instrument

This study utilized a researcher-made questionnaire. The questionnaire was translated in Filipino and was pre-tested to housewives who were not included as respondents of the study. Pre-testing was done to test the instrument for clarity and conciseness.

The survey questionnaire was composed of two parts. The first part gathered the demographic characteristics of the respondents which included age, number of children, highest educational qualification, present work and monthly income.

The second part was composed of 21 statements about acts of violence against women and their children

as stated in R.A. 9262 that determined the level of awareness and perception on the provisions of the said Republic Act. In this part, the respondents were instructed to indicate their level of awareness on the provisions of the said Republic Act by putting a check on the appropriate column.

Furthermore, they also stated their level of agreement/disagreement (perception) as to the extent by which they want the given statements to be considered as act of violence against women and their children by checking the appropriate column.

Procedure

The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to the housewife-respondent. A short briefing was done before the respondents started answering the questions.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics like frequency counts, percentages, means and range were used to analyze the data.

The level of awareness of the respondents towards R.A. 9262 was determined based on the rating below:

Rating Scale	Adjectival Rating
1.00 – 1.50	Not Aware (NA)
1.51 – 2.50	Slightly Aware (SA)
2.51 – 3.50	Moderately Aware (MA)
3.51 – 4.50	Aware (A)
4.51 – 5.00	Fully Aware (FA)

On the other hand, the 5-point scale was used to determine the perception of the respondents regarding the provisions of the republic act.

Rating Scale	Adjectival Rating
1.00 – 1.50	Strongly Disagree (S/D)
1.51 – 2.50	Disagree (D)
2.51 – 3.50	Undecided (U)
3.51 – 4.50	Agree (A)
4.51 – 5.00	Strongly Agree (S/A)

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of age, number of children, educational attainment, present work and monthly family income. Findings revealed that almost one third of the respondents were 28-35 years old, has 3-4 children, high school graduates with less than PhP

5,000 monthly family income and were plain housewives.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of housewife-respondents (N=700)

Characteristics	f	%
Age		
20 – 27	82	11.71
28 – 35	217	31.00
36 – 43	187	26.71
44 – 51	156	22.29
52 – 59	46	6.57
60 – 67	12	1.71
Mean	38.39	
Number of children		
1-2	228	32.57
3-4	261	37.29
5-6	153	21.86
7-8	54	7.71
9-10	4	0.57
Mean	3.63	
Educational attainment		
No education	25	3.57
Non-formal	32	4.57
Elementary level	40	5.71
Elementary graduate	67	9.57
High school level	181	25.86
High school graduate	194	27.71
College level	134	19.14
College graduate	27	3.86
Present work		
plain housewife	393	56.14
government employee	92	13.14
farmer	79	11.29
self employed	67	9.57
private employee	37	5.29
fisherman	17	2.43
house helper	15	2.14
Monthly family income		
Less than PhP 5	429	61.29
PhP5	191	27.29
PhP10	65	9.29
More than PhP 20	15	2.14

Table 2 presents the awareness of the housewives regarding Republic Act 9262. The respondents were slightly aware on the following provisions: (9) Depriving or threatening to deprive the woman or her child of a legal right; (10) preventing the woman in engaging in any legitimate profession, occupation, business or activity; and (11) controlling the victim's

own money or properties, or solely controlling the conjugal or common money, or properties.

Except the three provisions that were stated above, the respondents were moderately aware with the rest of the other provisions. The obtained overall mean of 3.11 described as “moderately aware” implies that the respondents are not so knowledgeable with the provisions of R.A. 9262.

The findings is contrary to the study of Caparas and Amparado (2012) who researched on “Women's Awareness on the Law on Anti-Violence against Women and their Children” when they stated that majority of the respondents were aware of the intimate partner violence in RA 9262.

Table 2. Level of awareness of housewives in selected municipalities in Palawan regarding R.A. 9262

Provisions	Aborlan	Narra	Brooke's Point	Quezon	Rizal	Bataraza	El Nido	Grand Mean	Adjectival Rating
1. Causing physical harm to the woman or her child;	4.05	4.35	2.20	3.98	3.03	2.96	3.60	3.46	MA
2. Threatening to cause the woman or her child physical harm;	3.94	4.38	2.39	3.84	2.98	3.11	3.23	3.41	MA
3. Attempting to cause the woman or her child physical harm;	4.52	4.63	2.76	3.70	2.75	2.85	2.82	3.43	MA
4. Placing the woman or her child in fear of imminent physical harm;	3.51	4.75	2.74	3.52	2.35	3.40	3.02	3.33	MA
5. Attempting to compel or compelling the woman or her child to engage in conduct which the woman or her child has the right to desist from or desist from conduct which the woman or her child has the right to engage in;	3.57	4.59	2.47	2.72	1.83	2.90	3.01	3.01	MA
6. Attempting to restrict or restricting the woman's or her child's freedom of movement or conduct by force or threat of force, physical or other harm or threat of physical or other harm, or intimidation directed against the woman or child;	3.48	4.71	2.62	3.68	2.46	3.40	2.92	3.31	MA
7. Threatening to deprive or actually depriving the woman or her child of custody to her/his family;	3.64	4.63	2.45	3.32	2.12	3.25	2.56	3.14	MA
8. Depriving or threatening to deprive the woman or her children of financial support legally due her or her family, or deliberately providing the woman's children insufficient financial support;	4.28	4.63	2.62	3.26	1.86	2.90	3.05	3.23	MA
9. Depriving or threatening to deprive the woman or her child of a legal right;	2.89	2.47	2.45	2.63	2.12	2.30	2.47	2.48	A
10. Preventing the woman in engaging in any legitimate profession, occupation, business or activity;	2.91	3.12	2.32	2.47	2.41	2.25	1.85	2.48	A
11. Controlling the victim's own money or properties, or solely controlling the conjugal or common money, or properties;	2.64	2.56	2.61	2.14	2.10	2.75	2.14	2.42	A

Table 2. Level of awareness of housewives in selected municipalities in Palawan regarding R.A. 9262

Provisions	Aborlan	Narra	Brooke's Point	Quezon	Rizal	Bataraza	El Nido	Grand Mean	Adjectival Rating
12. Inflicting or threatening to inflict physical harm on oneself for the purpose of controlling her actions or decisions;	3.31	4.71	3.00	3.11	1.81	3.90	2.75	3.23	MA
13. Causing or attempting to cause the woman or her child to engage in any sexual activity which does not constitute rape, by force or threat of force, physical harm, or through intimidation directed against the woman or her child or her/his immediate family;	2.88	4.63	3.07	3.27	1.99	2.94	2.53	3.04	MA
14. Stalking or following the woman or her child in public or private places;	3.12	4.60	2.74	3.11	2.30	2.95	2.99	3.12	MA
15. Peering in the window or lingering outside the residence of the woman or her child;	3.40	4.52	2.93	2.96	2.96	3.00	2.14	3.13	MA
16. Entering or remaining in the dwelling or on the property of the woman or her child against her/his will;	3.37	4.68	2.56	3.29	2.54	2.94	2.73	3.16	MA
17. Destroying the property and personal belongings or inflicting harm to animals or pets of the woman or her child;	3.61	4.76	3.03	2.76	2.57	3.61	2.27	3.23	MA
18. Engaging in any form of harassment or violence;	3.17	4.70	2.78	3.10	2.61	3.40	2.43	3.17	MA
19. Causing mental or emotional anguish, public ridicule or humiliation to the woman or her child, including, but not limited to, repeated verbal and emotional abuse;	3.39	4.62	2.88	2.84	2.48	3.60	2.70	3.22	MA
20. Denial of financial support to wife and family;	3.76	4.68	2.88	3.07	2.41	3.05	2.30	3.16	MA
21. Denial of custody of minor children of access to the woman's child/children.	3.30	4.60	2.94	2.98	2.26	3.65	2.28	3.14	MA
Overall Mean								3.11	MA

Table 3 shows the perception of the housewives in the different municipalities of Palawan regarding R.A. 9262. Results revealed that all of the housewife-respondents strongly agreed that the provisions or statements of R.A. 9262 are considered acts of violence against women and their children with an overall mean of 4.77.

It implies that the repondents have positive perception on the provisions of the Republic act. The findings is in consonance with the statement of the participants during the USE RA 9262 National Network of Family Violence Prevention Programs (NNFVPP) Partners' Assembly last October 17-20, 2011 organized by the Asia Society for Social Improvement and

Sustainable Transformation (ASSIST) and the Women's Crisis Center (WCC), participants shared that there is now an increasing number of women victim-survivors who file for Barangay Protection Orders (BPO) or formal cases against perpetrators of abuse/violence against women and their children

(VAWC). Most of them attributed this progress to the organizations, barangays and agencies advocating against VAWC, thus, making Filipino women more aware of their rights. (<http://sheenacarmelopulencia.wordpress.com>).

Table 3. Mean rating of the perception of housewives in selected municipalities in Palawan regarding R.A. 9262.

Provisions	Aborlan	Narra	Brooke's Point	Quezon	Rizal	Bataraza	El Nido	Grand Mean	Adjectival Rating
1. Causing physical harm to the woman or her child;	4.84	4.83	4.88	4.88	5.00	4.66	4.66	4.82	SA
2. Threatening to cause the woman or her child physical harm;	4.85	4.85	4.89	4.82	5.00	4.25	4.27	4.70	SA
3. Attempting to cause the woman or her child physical harm;	4.87	4.85	4.98	4.97	5.00	4.67	4.68	4.86	SA
4. Placing the woman or her child in fear of imminent physical harm;	4.80	4.83	4.89	4.86	5.00	5.00	4.33	4.82	SA
5. Attempting to compel or compelling the woman or her child to engage in conduct which the woman or her child has the right to desist from or desist from conduct which the woman or her child has the right to engage in;	4.79	4.82	5.00	4.89	5.00	5.00	4.18	4.81	SA
6. Attempting to restrict or restricting the woman's or her child's freedom of movement or conduct by force or threat of force, physical or other harm or threat of physical or other harm, or intimidation directed against the woman or child;	4.82	4.79	4.92	4.92	5.00	5.00	4.10	4.79	SA
7. Threatening to deprive or actually depriving the woman or her child of custody to her/his family;	4.78	4.79	4.95	4.90	5.00	5.00	4.23	4.81	SA
8. Depriving or threatening to deprive the woman or her children of financial support legally due her or her family, or deliberately providing the woman's children insufficient financial support;	4.82	4.74	5.00	4.79	4.92	5.00	4.15	4.77	SA
9. Depriving or threatening to deprive the woman or her child of a legal right;	4.77	4.85	5.00	4.86	5.00	5.00	4.20	4.81	SA
10. Preventing the woman in engaging in any legitimate profession, occupation, business or activity;	4.78	4.85	4.96	4.86	4.88	5.00	4.22	4.79	SA
11. Controlling the victim's own money or properties, or solely controlling the conjugal or common money, or properties;	4.79	4.75	5.00	4.82	4.90	5.00	4.15	4.77	SA
12. Inflicting or threatening to inflict physical harm on oneself for the purpose of controlling her actions or decisions;	4.88	4.82	5.00	4.91	4.78	5.00	4.22	4.80	SA

Table 3. Mean rating of the perception of housewives in selected municipalities in Palawan regarding R.A. 9262.

Provisions	Aborlan	Narra	Brooke's Point	Quezon	Rizal	Bataraza	El Nido	Grand Mean	Adjectival Rating
13. Causing or attempting to cause the woman or her child to engage in any sexual activity which does not constitute rape, by force or threat of force, physical harm, or through intimidation directed against the woman or her child or her/his immediate family;	4.79	4.50	5.00	4.88	4.82	5.00	4.17	4.75	SA
14. Stalking or following the woman or her child in public or private places;	4.84	4.87	5.00	4.72	4.82	5.00	4.18	4.78	SA
15. Peering in the window or lingering outside the residence of the woman or her child;	4.87	4.86	4.98	4.79	4.77	5.00	4.12	4.77	SA
16. Entering or remaining in the dwelling or on the property of the woman or her child against her/his will;	4.78	4.82	5.00	4.82	4.91	5.00	4.10	4.78	SA
17. Destroying the property and personal belongings or inflicting harm to animals or pets of the woman or her child;	4.90	4.77	5.00	4.90	4.90	5.00	4.15	4.80	SA
18. Engaging in any form of harassment or violence;	4.92	4.87	4.98	4.98	4.90	4.10	4.32	4.72	SA
19. Causing mental or emotional anguish, public ridicule or humiliation to the woman or her child, including, but not limited to, repeated verbal and emotional abuse;	4.71	4.84	4.92	4.86	4.88	4.15	4.10	4.64	SA
20. Denial of financial support to wife and family;	4.89	4.79	4.79	4.84	4.89	4.15	4.18	4.65	SA
21. Denial of custody of minor children of access to the woman's child/children.	4.87	4.87	4.88	4.90	5.00	4.18	4.11	4.69	SA
Overall Mean								4.77	SA

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The respondents were plain housewives and in their adult age. The respondents were moderately aware on the provisions of R.A. 9262. The respondents had positive perception on the provisions of R.A. 9262.

It is recommended that the university, Specifically the Department of Extension, should conduct extension activities that will focus on increasing the level of awareness on RA 9262 among the housewives in the different municipalities of Palawan to make them fully aware of the provisions of the act and help them to be safe from domestic violence. The Local Government Units, specially, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) offices in the different municipalities should conduct information dissemination with regards to the legal right of women for the protection of their welfare and their rights. For further research, a similar study be conducted and

include married men as the target respondents to see both male and females' point of view on R.A. 9262.

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